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AN
HISTORICAL REVIEW
OF THE
STATE OF IRELAND,
FROM THE
INVASION OF THAT COUNTRY UNDER HENRY II.
TO ITS
UNION WITH GREAT BRITAIN

On the 1st of January, 1801.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

By FRANCIS PLOWDEN, Esq.

VOL. II. PART I.

Pauci prudentiâ, honesta ab deterioribus, utilia ab noxiis discernunt: plures aliorum eventis docentur.

TAC. 4. *Ann.* 33.

Few are qualified by their own reflection to mark the boundaries between vice and virtue. To separate the useful from that which leads to destruction is not the talent of every man. The example of others is the school of wisdom.

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Page 57, Note, for 353 read 225.

187, ditto, line 4, for *Themnopylæ* read *Thermopylæ*.

209, line ult. for *considerable* read *considerate*.

561, line 17, first word, omit *he*.

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VOLUME THE SECOND.

CHAPTER VI.

FROM THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE IRISH LEGISLATIVE INDEPENDENCE IN THE YEAR 1782 TO THE BREAKING OUT OF THE REBELLION IN THE YEAR 1793.

WE have traced Ireland through centuries of calamity and oppression in all the variety of irritation, despondency, moderation, firmness, resentment, and submissiveness, at last settled in the enjoyment of a free and independent constitution, by the liberal, manly, and constitutional conduct of an administration, which though short-lived has left this country a practical lesson, that the principles, which have carried a minority into power are not always abandoned by them, when they have acquired it. To the Rockingham administration did Ireland owe her independence in 1782. It remains for us to consider the use made of it by that country. The appointment to the vice-

regency of Ireland had been ever considered as a principal part of the support and strength of the British administration. Upon this ground was the Earl Temple appointed under the administration of Earl Shelburne. He had intermarried with the daughter of Earl Nugent, upon whom her father had on the marriage settled the bulk of his large domains in Ireland. Lord Nugent had on every occasion, both in public and private, proved himself a sincere and warm lover of his country : the relative gratitude of the Irish to his son-in-law, the character and accomplishments of the new viceroy, and the virtues of his amiable consort, had ensured him a most cordial welcome and an anticipated earnest of his zealous efforts for the happiness and prosperity of the Irish people. He succeeded the Duke of Portland on the 15th of September, 1782, and was received with public expressions of joy and satisfaction.

During the short period of Lord Temple's continuance in the government of that kingdom, his chief attention appears to have been directed to the establishment of a system of œconomy throughout the different departments; a reformation supereminently necessary. The short-lived administration of Lord Shelburne, of which Lord Temple was no inconsiderable support, determined his viceregency on the 3d of June, 1783. He was in power long enough to have brought upon himself much invidious opposition, from several secondary dependants upon the Castle, who dreaded nothing so much as a scrutiny into the system of their abuses; and not long enough for the nation to have felt the happy effects of so laudable an investigation. His lordship's indefatigable assiduity and perseverance in scrutinizing the accounts, minutiae and details of office were wholly unprecedented. It was during the Rockingham administration, that the conclusion was properly put to the contest between Great Britain and the American colonies; for in February, 1782, the British House of Commons came to the following resolution :

“ That an humble address be presented to his majesty, most humbly to re-
 “ present to his majesty, that the further prosecution of offensive war on the
 “ continent of North America, for the purpose of reducing the revolted co-
 “ lonies to obedience by force, will be the means of weakening the efforts
 “ of this country against her European enemies; tends, under the present
 “ circumstances, dangerously to increase the mutual enmity so fatal to
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“ the interests both of Great Britain and America, and, by preventing an
 “ happy reconciliation with that country, to frustrate the earnest desire gra-
 “ ciously expressed by his majesty to restore the blessings of public tran-
 “ quillity.”*

Measures having been accordingly adopted for terminating the unfortunate contest, the peace was concluded by Lord Shelburne's administration; which could not fail to infuse joy into the Irish nation, and render them more reconciled to the sudden change of that administration, through which they had obtained their independence, in which Lord Shelburne bore a considerable part.

The parliament of Ireland was not then fitting: but it has been observed, that the questions of simple repeal and positive declaration or renunciation of rights was kept up by the armed bodies of the volunteers with a warmer spirit of difference, than they had been within the walls of parliament. And as these differences could not be concealed from the British parliament, it behoves us to consider, how they were induced to act upon them. On the 19th of December, 1782, in the British House of Commons, Colonel Fitzpatrick begged to call the attention of government to the circumstance, which had given some alarm to the people of Ireland, the decision of an Irish cause in the court of King's Bench in England. He wished just to beg that ministers would, before the recess, give some intimation of what they intended to do in that question.

Mr. Secretary Townshend assured the honorable gentleman, that government had spent many hours in the business of Ireland, and they had the strongest dispositions to do every thing in their power to confirm the happy settlement, which had taken place last session. He explained the late decision to have arisen from a circumstance, which could not be provided against,

* To which address his majesty returned this answer:

“ GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS,

“ There are no objects nearer to my heart than the ease, happiness, and prosperity of my people.

“ You may be assured that, in pursuance to your advice, I shall take such measures as shall appear to me to be most conducive to the restoration of harmony between Great Britain and the revolted colonies, so essential to the prosperity of both; and that my efforts shall be directed in the most effectual manner against our European enemies, till such peace can be obtained, as shall be consistent with the interests and permanent welfare of my kingdoms.”

viz. that the cause had been in the court for eighteen months, and the judges were bound to decide upon it.

Colonel Fitzpatrick said, that he was only anxious, that satisfaction should be given to the Irish nation on this ground, and that they should learn, before the recess, that this country was well disposed to give every necessary satisfaction. This was particularly to be wished, because pains had been taken to spread ideas, that what had been done was not sufficient for the security of Ireland; and on the score of this decision surmises had been thrown out against the friends of order and reason, who were convinced of the rectitude of the intentions of Britain. He understood, that there were several other causes in the court of King's Bench.

Mr. Secretary Townshend assured him there were not. Though there were two appeals before the House of Lords, which had also been there before the act of last session; but he understood, that they would be removed, and pains had been taken to prevent any more appeals from being brought to England.

The Attorney General explained the reason of the late decision very clearly, and said it was impossible for the noble lord (Mansfield) at the head of that court, who was the pride and ornament of human nature, to prevent the decision. He said there were no more Irish causes, and it was now impossible, that there should be any more.

Mr. Fox declared, that the intentions of those ministers, who had sent the repeal of the declaratory law, were thereby to make a complete, absolute, and perpetual surrender of the British legislative and judicial supremacy over Ireland. This was the intention of government; and it was the clear conviction both of ministers and of the gentlemen of Ireland, who interested themselves in the business, that the manner in which this was done was the best possible way, and the least liable to exception. Since that had been done, opinions had been propagated, that a renunciation was better than a repeal. A renunciation was then thought of; but it was the opinion of the gentlemen, that if Britain did it by a renunciation of the right, it would be offensive to Ireland, because thereby we should have declared, that we possessed the right. Again, a renunciation, stating it to be a right, which we never legally possessed, was what England would not be brought to agree to, and therefore that plan pursued was preferred to every other: it was clearly understood to be a complete surrender, and was received with cordiality by those gentlemen, whom he would pronounce to be the best and truest friends to Ireland.

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*On the next day Mr. William Grenville (secretary to his brother, the lord lieutenant of Ireland) said, he lamented, that he had not been present at a conversation, which he understood had taken place the preceding night, relative to Ireland; if he had been present, he would have informed the house, that the late decision in the King's Bench in England, which had occasioned much jealousy in Ireland, had been taken notice of immediately by the lord lieutenant, who had not lost a moment to remonstrate on that subject with his majesty's ministers, and to make known to them the effect it had produced in the minds of the people of Ireland; and he must do ministers the justice to say, he had found them very well disposed to remove the ground of jealousy; it was necessary also, that he should do justice to the lord lieutenant, by declaring, that there was not a man in either kingdom, more decidedly of opinion than his excellency was, that the faith of England was pledged to Ireland for the truth of this proposition, that England had fully and completely renounced all legislative and judicial jurisdiction; and that nothing could be more conducive to the harmony and interests of both kingdoms, than that this national faith should be preserved inviolate. He said, he intended to move for a call of the house at an earlier day than the 22d of next month; however, he hoped, that gentlemen would be in town before that day; in that hope he gave notice, that a motion would be made in the house relative to Ireland.

Mr. Secretary Townshend complained, that what he had said in the conversation last night on the subject of Ireland, had been grossly misrepresented in some publications; for though he had said, that "great pains had been taken to prevent any more appeals being brought from Ireland," yet he was represented to have said just the very contrary: it was not of much importance, he observed, what he, as an individual member of the house, might have said; but when it might be supposed, that he was speaking the sentiments of his majesty's ministers, it was of great consequence, that he should not be misrepresented.

Lord Beauchamp said, that as a friend of both kingdoms, his only object was to secure a lasting harmony between them; if he should be able to root out every remains of jealousy, his great object would be accomplished, and he would sit down the happiest of men. As to the writs of error to England,

* 9 Parl. Debates, p. 131.

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he knew they could in future be of no effect; for as a law had passed in Ireland to prevent the judges of that kingdom to certify into England the record of the proceedings in any cause, so of course there was an end of appeals, as far as Ireland could put an end to them; but as an act of parliament of Ireland could not shut up a court of law in England, it was necessary that an English act should be passed for that purpose; for, until such an act should pass, he should hold it to be sound law, that whatever person feels, or thinks himself aggrieved by a decision of a court of law in Ireland, may apply to the King's Bench in England, which court is bounden to entertain his cause, though it be at present impossible that the judges of that court could give redress in such a case, as every decision in England affecting a cause, that originated in and belonged to Ireland, made since the passing of the Irish act alluded to, must of course be null and void. He appealed then to the house, if it would not be proper to pass a law, which should direct the courts not to entertain Irish causes, their decisions on which must necessarily be ineffectual.

On the 22d of January, 1783,* Mr. Secretary Townshend brought forward the business of Ireland before the House of Commons, with an explicit avowal, that the principle, upon which the parliament had acted last session, was to give Ireland every satisfaction, that justice demanded, and that was consistent with the dignity of Great Britain. The mode, that had been adopted to convey that satisfaction, might not have been such as to prevent all cavil, and to take away every pretext from those, who might have a greater wish for embroiling, than for settling public affairs. Ireland did not desire, and would not accept of a grant of rights from Great Britain; and at the same time her good sense, and her regard for this country, would not suffer her to propose or demand what England would not do, what she could not do, without recording her own shame, namely, to declare, that for centuries she had usurped the rights of Ireland. As for himself, nothing was farther from his intention, than to impeach the mode of proceeding of the administration, under whose direction the Irish business had been conducted last year; he believed that sincerity and wisdom had guided their steps; but some untoward circumstances had intervened, to prevent them from producing all the good effect, that might have been expected from them, particularly a late decision in the court of King's Bench here, which had excited jealousies in the breasts even of the best inten-

* 9 Parl. Debates, p. 138.

tioned men in Ireland. In what he had just said, Mr. Secretary declared, nothing could be farther from his meaning, than in any, the most distant manner, even to reflect on the conduct of the judges of the court of King's Bench, with regard to their determination on the writ of error. He was perfectly conscious, that they were bounden to act as they had done; that it was not in their own power legally to have acted otherwise; and, that in reality, what they had done, did not affect the question between the two countries. Ireland claimed a sole and exclusive exercise of judicature, as well as of legislation; having given up the legislation, the judicature was certainly not worth contending for; and therefore, were there not other great and weighty reasons of policy and justice in the case, he should think England ought, knowing what the wish of Ireland was, to meet it cheerfully and readily. He wished that his motion might pass unanimously, that the people of Ireland might see that England meant fairly, when she set out to remove the causes of their jealousies and discontents. He then moved for leave to bring in a bill

“ For removing and preventing all doubts which have arisen, or may arise, concerning the exclusive rights of the parliament and courts of Ireland in matters of legislation and judicature, and for preventing any writ of error, or appeal, from any of his majesty's courts in that kingdom, from being received, heard, and adjudged, in any of his majesty's courts in the kingdom of Great Britain.”

Mr. W. Grenville (Secretary to Lord Temple) seconded the motion; he was happy to find that government had so early, and of their own accord, brought forth the business; for though he would not say how jealousies had been excited in Ireland, there was no doubt, but jealousies did exist there; and that the late transaction in the court of King's Bench here, had in no small degree contributed to spread them wider. The necessity of taking some steps that should amount to such a prevention, struck him so forcibly, that he could not but rejoice exceedingly at what he had heard that day; at the same time he meant not to suggest the smallest impeachment of the measures of government last session, or of the intention of those gentlemen, who had managed the business on the part of Ireland.

Mr. Eden rose next. He said, that when Mr. Fox's propositions were discussed on the 17th of May last, he had ventured to declare his belief, that those propositions would be satisfactory to Ireland, and his opinion, that they ought to be satisfactory. He had not yet seen any reason to believe he

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had erred in either idea : he added, that he was far from meaning to express or convey censure, either on the ingenuity of the individuals, who had raised the doubt, or of the jealous sensibility of the people, who had adopted it. A doubt originated by the noble lord, forcibly stated in Ireland by the legal precision of Mr. Walshe, supported by the admirable and unwearied abilities of Mr. Flood, and countenanced by the manly firmness and eminent integrity of the Recorder of Dublin, was certainly not to be treated otherwise, than with respect. He never had admitted, nor would admit, that Ireland owed her acquisitions to the battalions of her volunteers, farther than as the volunteers were understood to express the general sense of the nation. His deference in these matters had been paid, not to their English firelocks, but to their Irish unanimity; he would have paid at least an equal deference to as many farmers or manufacturers, with the implements of their industry in their hands. Ireland ought then to found and rest her security, which she safely might, on the basis of national wisdom, national affection and national faith.

Colonel Fitzpatrick said, there was one expression, which he found fault with, and that was, that there were doubts and jealousies subsisting in the kingdom of Ireland. He knew of no such doubts and jealousies, and that house knew of none. There had not come to their knowledge, by any petition, memorial, or representation whatever, any account of these jealousies. If they noticed all rumours of reports, they would never know where to stop; for there would always start up some individuals, who would, by weak pretexts, and under various masks, endeavour to raise clamours as distinct from the voice of the nation, as the purpose, which they had in view, was distinct from the true interests of their country. The minds of men in Ireland had been, as it were, fermented and worked up into a kind of political fever; and he that expected that they would subside altogether in an instant, and grow every where perfectly calm and temperate, must be equally unacquainted with the state, humours, and sensations of the body politic, and the body natural. It was naturally to be imagined, that there would be in that country, as there must be in all countries, certain restless spirits, to whom the return of peace and order must be unfavourable. That such men should be ready to propagate stories and suspicions, was not strange; and it was no ways to be wondered at, if, by their address and cunning, they should bring over a certain set of men to listen to them. But was a wise and prudent government to call such clamours the voice of the nation? Certainly not; and he therefore wished that on the present

sent occasion, there had not been any mention made of the jealousies of the Irish nation.

Lord Beauchamp said, that there were jealousies in Ireland, was not to be doubted : that there were grounds for these jealousies, was an incontrovertible proposition* ; that the writ of error from Ireland, returnable into the King's Bench of England, was coeval with the constitution of Ireland ; it was impossible, therefore, that the mere repeal of the 6th of George I. could take this writ away : now, if it did not take it away, with what truth in argument could the right honorable gentleman say, that this country had fully and completely surrendered every legislative, every judicial jurisdiction over Ireland. But the right honorable member would say, " it was only of the appellate jurisdiction of the House of Lords that the Irish complained." To what did a writ of error brought into the King's Bench here ultimately tend ? Why, to establish that very appellate jurisdiction of the British House of Lords, of which the Irish had complained ; for no man could doubt but the party, who, in the appeal to the King's Bench, should think himself aggrieved, was by law entitled to take out a writ of error returnable in parliament ; and thus the English lords come once more into possession of that very judicial jurisdiction, which the right honorable gentleman would have the Irish erroneously believe had been fully surrendered up to them. His lordship took up the other branch of jurisdiction, the legislative ; and he maintained, that the Irish had been as much deceived in this point as in the former ; for though it were said, and erroneously said, that the rights of England over Ireland in matters of legislation, had been surrendered, scarcely three weeks had passed, when the English parliament legislated for Ireland, by passing an act prohibiting the exportation of blocks used in callico printing ; in this act, Ireland was expressly named, notwithstanding the very recent repeal of the 6th of George I. Had not the Irish a just cause for being alarmed at this breach of faith with them ? But was this the only instance of attempting to legislate for Ireland ?

* Colonel Fitzpatrick, on this occasion, read a paragraph out of a letter published by Lord Beauchamp to the Belfast volunteers, in which he had said, *if the people acquiesce in what has been done, my lips are for ever closed on the subject*. He contended, the people had acquiesced ; and was therefore surprised to find the noble lord running a race with the minister, who should first open his lips. On the very next day, (23d of January, 1783) Mr. Secretary Townshend announced to the house the signing of the preliminaries of peace between Great Britain, France, and Spain ; and that a cessation of hostilities with the United States of Holland had been agreed upon.

No: for that kingdom was expressly named in the act which opened the British ports for the importation of sugars, &c. the produce of St. Kitts, and other late British islands in the West-Indies. Surely, an attempt to open the ports of a kingdom, was one of the highest acts of sovereign power; and yet this power the British parliament had assumed, just after they had, in the opinion of the right honorable gentleman, surrendered all legislative authority over Ireland. Was it unnatural then, that jealousies should subsist in that country? He was very willing to allow, that in these cases the word Ireland had slipped in by oversight, and that it had passed the house through that indifference and inattention, which but too strongly prevailed. He did not doubt the sincerity of their intentions, but the matter might naturally excite disturbance in Ireland. And if none of all this had been done, a transaction had taken place at the close of the last session, which, of itself, might well excite jealousies, and keep them alive; for a noble lord in the upper house had read in his place a bill, which he said he would at another period move for leave to bring in, which bill proposed to resume and maintain the right of England to legislate externally for Ireland. Were the people of that country to be the sport and caprice of every man? Were they to have no other tenure, no other security for their rights, than the construction of law, than the mere repeal of a declaratory act? Was it not, therefore, wise and prudent in ministers to avail themselves of the present circumstance, when one parliament was sitting and the other not, to take such steps as would effectually stifle all jealousy, and draw from the parliament of Ireland, at their next meeting, addresses of affection, of kindness, of generosity, instead of gloomy and resentful remonstrances.

Colonel Fitzpatrick and Mr. Fox would not object to the Secretary's motion, although they saw no necessity for the bill; it was therefore moved for and carried unanimously.

In the discussion of the preliminary articles of peace, was formed the memorable coalition between Lord North and Mr. Fox. Several of the friends of both these gentlemen vehemently reprobated the terms of Lord Shelburne's peace. These gentlemen had, indeed, violently opposed each other on the question of the American war: but that being now set to rest, such of the former opponents as supported, or opposed rather measures than men, found no longer any grounds for opposing each other, and therefore united into one body for the common good of their country. On the 22d of February, the coalesced party brought all their forces to bear upon the ministry; and after

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a very long and heated debate, they outvoted the minister by 17 upon the following question :*—" That the concessions made to the adversaries of Great Britain, by the provisional treaty and preliminary articles, are greater than they were entitled to, either from the actual situation of their respective possessions, or from their comparative strength." In consequence of this defeat of the minister, on the 25th of February, 1782, the Secretary of State moved, " That the house, at its rising, should adjourn to Friday next : " it was not unknown to gentlemen, that arrangements were making for a new administration ; and it would be but proper that the house should adjourn over a few days, in order to afford time for completing the arrangements.

Earl Nugent opposed it ; he said, that a bill of the greatest importance relative to Ireland, was to be referred to a committee of the whole house on the morrow ; and gentlemen must see the impropriety of putting off a business so materially affecting such a great part of the empire, merely that ministerial arrangements might be made, when the bill had nothing to do with ministers : it was the great work of the people of England.

The Lord Advocate declared himself a friend to the adjournment, for the very reason, that moved the noble lord to oppose it: the bill to which he alluded was of too great a magnitude to be agitated during what he might

* 9 Parl. Debates, p. 369. The house sat till past three in the morning ; the ayes were 207, the noes 190. In consequence of this censure passed on the peace by the House of Commons, the Earl of Shelburne quitted his office of first commissioner of the treasury ; and the chancellor of the exchequer declared publicly in the house, that he only held his place till a successor should be appointed to fill it. A ministerial interregnum ensued, which lasted till the beginning of April ; during which time the kingdom remained in a state of great disorder, without any responsible government at home, the finances neglected, the military establishments unreduced, and the negotiations with foreign powers, which the critical conjuncture of affairs rendered peculiarly important, entirely at a stand.

Various causes were assigned for the extraordinary delay in the appointment of a new administration. Those who wished to shift all blame from the court, alledged, that the chief obstacle arose from the mutual jealousy, which still subsisted between the new allied parties, and the difficulties they found in adjusting their several pretensions. Others have supposed, that the interval was employed in private intrigues with the individuals of different parties, and in an attempt to form an administration independent of the great leading connexions. Others again did not hesitate to assert, that on the failure of this attempt, the influence possessed by the lord high chancellor, whose dismissal was a point insisted on by the coalition, was the principal arrangement. Such were the public conversations at the time, and so matters were frequently alluded to in the debates in parliament.

call a ministerial interregnum ; it was a bill that ought to have the marked countenance and support of administration.

Earl Nugent replied, that there was nothing farther from his wish than that the bill should be carried through parliament by ministerial influence ; nothing could do more honour to this nation, or give more satisfaction to Ireland, than that the bill should originate, and be carried through in a conviction in the minds of the people of England, that the bill was founded in justice, policy, and equity : the people of Ireland could have but little reason to deem the bill a security to their constitution, if they should be by any means led to think that it had been carried by the influence of administration, against the wishes of the people : nothing could satisfy the people of Ireland, but the idea, that the people of England with one voice agreed to the passing of this bill, from a conviction that it was fit it should be passed, and without being biased in their judgment by ministerial influence : it was not upon floating administrations, that stability could be founded ; and therefore it was to the people of England, not to ministers, that Ireland appealed ; and the people of England represented by that house, could alone give permanency to measures, they never could derive it from the insecure tenure of ministerial influence : ministers had nothing to do with the business ; the people were concerned ; and their representatives in that house might therefore proceed with the bill without giving themselves any trouble about ministers ; he cared not who were, or who were not ministers ; he was under no obligation either to those who were in, or to those, who, from report, he understood were likely to be their successors ; the bill concerned the nation, and the representatives of the people, who were most intimately concerned in it, ought to proceed in their own business without waiting for ministerial arrangements, for if they did, an idea might go forth, which ought to be crushed, that the bill was to be supported by the influence of administration.

On the 2d of April, 1783, it was announced to the British parliament that a new* arrangement was formed ; when Mr. Pitt moved the order of the day
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* The following is a List of the Coalition Administration.

The Duke of Portland, First Lord of the Treasury.

Lord North and Mr. Fox, principal Secretaries of State.

Lord John Cavendish, Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Lord Viscount Keppel, First Lord of the Admiralty.

Lord

on the American trade bill. Lord Sheffield violently opposed it as one of the most ill-managed and ill-considered bills ever brought before that house. In the course of his speech, he adverted to what he had said some few days before upon the subject of that bill's affecting Ireland.* That kingdom received as a right every advantage she had lately acquired, except the participation of the West-India monopoly; for that she was thankful, and in return passed the act, which lays the same duties as Britain on imported sugars, and other West-India articles, and lays prohibitory duties on similar articles from foreign

Lord Viscount Stormont, President of the Council.

The Earl of Carlisle, Privy Seal.

The above seven persons to form the cabinet.

Lord Loughborough, Sir William Henry Ashurst, and Sir Beaumont Hotham, Lords Commissioners for the custody of the great seal.

The Earl of Surrey, Frederic Montagu, Esq. and Sir Grey Cooper, Lords of the Treasury.

Hugh Pigot, Esq. Lord Viscount Dungannon, Hon. John Townshend, Sir John Lindsey, William Jolliffe, Esq. and Whitshed Keene, Esq. Lords of the Admiralty.

The Earl of Hertford, Lord Chamberlain.

The Earl of Dartmouth, Lord Steward of the Household.

Right Honorable Charles Greville, Treasurer of the Household.

Lord Viscount Townshend, Master General of the Ordnance.

John Courtenay, Esq. Surveyor General of the Ordnance.

Henry Strachey, Esq. Store-keeper of the Ordnance.

William Adam, Esq. Treasurer of the Ordnance.

Honorable Richard Fitzpatrick, Secretary at War.

Edmund Burke, Esq. Pay-master of the Forces.

Charles Townshend, Esq. Treasurer of the Navy.

The Earl of Cholmondeley, Captain of the Yeomen of the Guards.

James Wallace, Esq. Attorney-General.

John Lee, Esq. Solicitor-General.

Lord Foley, Joint Post-Master General.

Richard Brindley Sheridan, Esq. and Richard Burke, Esq. Secretaries to the Treasury.

Honorable Mr. St. John, and Honorable Colonel North, under Secretaries of State.

The Earl of Sandwich, Ranger and Keeper of St. James's Park and Hyde Park.

The Earl of Jersey, Captain of the Band of Pensioners.

Lord Hinchinbrook, Master of the Buck Hounds.

The Earl of Mansfield, Speaker of the House of Lords.

The Earl of Northington, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland.

Mr. Wyndham, Secretary of State for Ireland.

William Eden, Esq. Joint Vice-Treasurer of Ireland.

* 9 Parl. Debates, p. 594.

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islands. By this bill that monopoly would cease; deprived of the advantage, Ireland would think, that Britain had done away the consideration, which induced her to shut her ports against foreign sugars. The Irish act laying prohibitory duties was biennial, and would expire next Christmas; and it was not to be supposed under these circumstances she would continue it. Her redress would be to take foreign West India goods, at least she would not think it necessary to charge her own consumption of sugars with higher duties, than were required from America. She would expect to have West India goods on as good terms as the American States, now become foreign. West India planters should consider, whether a direct trade to the American States would recompense them for the loss of the Irish consumption; and parliament should consider what would be the state of smuggling from Ireland into this country, if Ireland should become the depôt for foreign West India goods, or of our own, under low duties.

The Irish judicature bill, which had gone up and been once read in the lords, had been suspended in its progress from the moment the change in ministry had been spoken of; and Lord Thurlow publicly avowed in a conversation upon that bill's standing for the order of the day, that he had been the person, who advised the noble lord, who had moved the first reading of the bill, not to move the second, but to let the bill remain till his majesty's present ministers chose to take it up. His lordship further observed, that the bill then before the house had been concerted with the advice of the present lord lieutenant of Ireland; a noble lord, of whom both in private and in public he had heard sufficient in praise to convince him, that he was a man of great abilities, of great wisdom, and of great integrity. Advice coming from such a man, and it being considered what a great stake that noble lord had in both countries, too much attention could not certainly be paid to the noble lord's suggestions. For these reasons, he hoped, and most anxiously hoped, that the noble lord was not to be recalled, but was to remain where he was, and where he had conducted himself in his high capacity, in a manner that redounded so much to his own honor, at the same time that it was productive of infinite advantage to the interests of both kingdoms. His lordship reasoned upon this for a considerable time, and said, that if unfortunately the noble earl were to leave Ireland, and any body else were to be sent thither, it would become a noble Duke (of Portland) more particularly to inform the house in the fullest manner, how the present bill would suit that wisdom,

wisdom, which the administration of that day meant to pursue, that the house might judge of the propriety, practicability, and policy of the whole, before they darkly and blindly gave their sanction to one part only. Then the Earl of Mansfield put the question, "that the bill be read a second time on Monday next, and the lords be summoned;" which was ordered accordingly; and on the 14th of April, 1783, Lord Aberdeen made a very long and able speech upon the bill then under the contemplation of the house: He had seen with infinite pleasure, that what Ireland had required of England, had been in all its extent acquiesced in by his majesty's ministers. He had seen an act of parliament no less offensive to the constitution of this country, than subversive of the right of Ireland, repealed and expunged from our Statute Books. But he had also seen, that although this had been done at the instance and requisition of both houses of parliament in Ireland, Ireland was not satisfied with it; and seeing that, as the true friend to both countries, he endeavoured to draw that line of relation betwixt the two, which the interest of each seemed to call for and require, and in which he felt himself upholden, maintained, and supported by the constitution of England.

In considering the subject, two things occurred to his observation; one the right, which this country had exercised of internal legislation over Ireland; the other, the right, which this country possessed of external legislation over Ireland, so far as that legislation regarded the navigation and commerce of that kingdom. With respect to the first, the right of internal legislation, it was clear to him, that no right so manifestly in the teeth of the constitution of this country, however it had been exercised, could on principle be maintained; for as it was a fundamental principle of the constitution, that legislation and representation were inseparable, therefore inasmuch as Ireland was not represented in the British parliament, Ireland could not be subject to the legislature of the British parliament; but of the right of external legislation, so far as it respected the navigation and commerce of that kingdom, his opinion and judgment were the very reverse: that right being founded on the right to the dominion of the sea, was a common law right, a fundamental right coequal with the constitution of this country, he found it so laid down passim in all our common law books, as well as expressly declared in the statute of the 2^d of Henry VI. chap. 9. to wit:

"The parliament of England cannot bind Ireland, as to their lands, for they have a parliament there; but they may bind them as to things transitory,

tory, as the shipping of wool, or merchandize, to the intent to carry it to another place beyond sea." An authority, which whilst it maintained the rights of external legislation *quoad* the commerce of Ireland, it defeated the right of internal legislation, for the reason given, namely, "for that they" have a parliament there."

He asked if the people of Ireland wished to remain subjects of the crown of England? If they did, the moment that bill passed, they were no longer so. For the subjects of the crown of England must be, and are, of continual necessity, under the legislative authority of this country. The crown itself is under the legislative authority of this country, and of course those, who are dependant upon this crown, so far as the constitution admits of it, must be so too. That they may be subjects of the king of England, is true, and so they will be; and so are the people of Hanover subjects of the king of England; but does Ireland wish to be upon the footing of Hanover with this country? and yet the case must and will be so. Suppose an act of parliament were to pass, restraining the prerogative of the crown in any given instance with respect to Ireland, would not Ireland be bounden by that act of parliament? Must not Ireland submit to that act of parliament? For how could Ireland oppose or resist it but by an act of rebellion, if the people of Ireland be the subjects of the crown of England, and the crown of England be subject to the legislation of England? Do the people of Ireland wish to have seats in the British parliament? This bill incapacitates them from being members of the British legislature. It was by acts of parliament, that the right of sitting in the two houses of parliament was regulated; and the people of Ireland not being to be bounden by acts of parliament, they are in so much aliens, *quoad* their claim to this right. From the moment that act did pass, the Irish were no longer our fellow subjects. If that right be in us, that right is delegated to us, and no delegated right is, or can be in its nature transferable. This is sound constitutional doctrine, and not to be opposed; besides, at best this is but an act of parliament, and all acts of parliament are repealable; and then the right reverts to its fundamental source. Let the Irish remember, that the 6th of George I. has been repealed.

The Duke of Richmond said, that in many respects he agreed with the noble earl, and must do him the justice to say, he never heard a series of arguments better digested. His grace went over much of the old ground, and amongst other things their lordships would be pleased to consider, that not
only

only in regard to peace and war, in regard to rivalship in commerce, in regard to ecclesiastical matters, the separation created by the present bill would be materially alarming to England. Suppose that England should have occasion to go to war, and Ireland should find herself disposed to remain at peace, should refuse to give aid, and furnish her quotas to the cause of the empire; suppose that in negotiations for peace, the terms agreed on by the English ministers, should be objected to by the Irish; suppose that in regulations and treaties of commerce with foreign states the Irish should contend with the English, in these and a thousand other possible suppositions, was it possible that this total separation could be submitted to by the people of England? But there were other most important dangers to be apprehended. All these arguments powerfully bore upon the ultimate necessity of an incorporate union, without which the two kingdoms must be constantly exposed, to these monstrous anomalies and mischiefs in government. These were reasons that made it indispensably necessary for their lordships to enquire whether this was to be followed by any other measure, and whether the present ministers had adopted it as a part of a system, upon which the mutual connexion of the two countries was to be established. This was particularly necessary to be known, on account of the very unaccountable and opposite mixture of opinion and principle that existed in the cabinet at that time. It was impossible that he, or that any man could rationally trust to the measures of an administration, where the principles were so opposite and contradictory; one part of which he revered as much as he reprobated the other. The noble duke severely animadverted upon Lord North's conduct respecting Ireland, and endeavoured to prove, that the noble lord had been the cause of all the uneasiness and oppression felt and complained of by Ireland, and of her taking up arms to do herself justice, when she found the British parliament would do nothing for her. His Grace stated the frequent attempts made to relieve her trade in trifling particulars, all of which were defeated by the opposition of local interests. He mentioned the bill allowing her to import her own sugars, which he said was ultimately defeated by the interposition of Lord North, on a division of 64 to 58; he afterwards stated the declaration of a noble earl at that time at the head of his majesty's councils (Earl Gower) at the end of the session of 1779 (that the address then moved respecting Ireland by the Marquis of Rockingham, should not be opposed, if the censure of ministers were taken out) the accompanying promise, that something for

the relief of Ireland should be thought of against the next session, and the noble earl's subsequent resignation of his office, and his informing the house when parliament met again, that his reason for having quitted his majesty's councils was, "because the promise he had ventured to make to their lordships had not been fulfilled, and nothing had been done for Ireland." His Grace dwelt on these particulars for some time, and then took the liberty of asking from the noble duke, who was at the head of the new administration, not what was to be his system, but whether or not it were the design of the cabinet to follow up this bill with others; and whether this were only a part, or the whole of their system with regard to the settlement of the relative situation of the two kingdoms?

The Duke of Portland said, that it would be a very improper thing for him to divulge prematurely the purposes of the king's ministers. He always had been, and always should be ready, to do every thing in his power to cement the connexion between Great Britain and Ireland, on terms of mutual affection and mutual interest. He therefore most heartily concurred in the present bill; he submitted to the candor of the house whether it were fair to suspect until there was an appearance of guilt, and whether it were right to call upon him for official communications of future measures or designs. Beside, their lordships would recollect how very short the time was since they had come into office, and in fairness they could not be expected to be fully informed of the various topics in the offices.

Lord Thurlow professed, that he could not see any thing unreasonable or improper in the question, which the noble duke had asked. It was applicable to the occasion, and he thought, that without being satisfied on the point, their lordships could not fairly be called to the decision of the present question. What was the question? Was the present bill the whole or only the part of a system? On what grounds was it to be adopted by the present ministers? For what purpose was it to be passed? To what end was it to be applied? In all this was there any thing, which in the smallest degree, could give embarrassment to ministers in answering? There had been full time from Friday to Monday, to have examined every paper on the subject: and what made this appear more singular, was, that many of those papers must have come from the noble duke himself, and a noble earl his now colleague in administration; would not their lordships then suppose, that no men could have been fixed on so capable of speedily determining what was expected, and what ought

ought to be done to secure a lasting and permanent connexion with our sister kingdom : and yet these men, according to their own accounts, were the most improper and incapable of all persons living. He said he could not but lament the frequent changes, which revolutions in politics in this kingdom made in the lord lieutenants of that country. The people were scarcely settled with a representative of the crown, before intelligence arrived, that they were to part with him, and that another was appointed in his stead. This circumstance was sufficient to make them have a very poor opinion of the councils of this country, and that we were guided by caprice, whim, and unsteadiness : the present nobleman who filled that high office, by his generosity, his large connexions in both countries, his affability and integrity, had won their good opinion in a short time ; and this was no sooner done than their favorite was to be taken from them.

Lord Loughborough said, that on this question he had no peculiar means of acquiring information with respect to the designs of the cabinet. He had no other information than as a lord of parliament, and as such, he must declare freely, that he thought the present conversation, for it was not a debate, on the merits of the bill extremely irregular, if not disorderly. Not a word was started in objection to the bill as to itself, but ministers were called upon to divulge their future system, and to declare what they were to be to the house. He did not think this perfectly consistent with fairness, nor was it the kind of opposition, which any ministry would have reason to dread.

Lord Viscount Townshend said, it was not candid nor fair to demand from ministers, at so early a period after their introduction to office, the system which they were to pursue with Ireland. This, at least, was evident ; that if they meant to act a fair, a manly, and an honest part, the present bill was necessary, since it confirmed what was done in the last session, and none of those alarming evils were to be apprehended from it. The fluctuation of Irish opinions was easily to be accounted for. The incessant change of the government must naturally give rise to fresh jealousies and new opinions, and while this very great evil continued, it was impossible that we could expect to see our sister kingdom truly and permanently fixed in her system and sentiments. He declared it was his opinion, that for want of acting unequivocally on former occasions, all our misfortunes, including even the loss of America, had arisen ; that what they felt in their own breasts should govern their public conduct ; and the national honor, like the personal honor of
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their

their lordships, should be deemed sacred, and on no account to be violated. Public credit depended on the public faith; the abandonment of the latter consequently must prove the ruin of the former. After a very heated debate and personal reflections from the Duke of Chandos and Lord Radnor upon the new ministers having seized on the reins of government by force, and outraged royalty by peremptory conditions, the bill was committed without a dissenting voice.

No bill ever produced more debates, yet it never brought on one division. And it must be allowed, that under the variety of changes, which the British ministry experienced at that critical period, they all centered in one accord, to give ease, satisfaction, and perfect constitutional liberty to Ireland. There cannot be a more unimpeachable voucher, than the *act for finally settling the independent legislation and judicature of Ireland.

Whilst

* The act 23 George III. c. 28. intituled, “ An Act for preventing and removing all doubts
“ which have arisen, or may arise, concerning the exclusive rights of the parliament and courts
“ of Ireland, in matters of legislation and judicature; and for preventing any writ of error or ap-
“ peal from any of his majesty’s courts in that kingdom from being received, heard, and adjudged,
“ in any of his majesty’s courts in the kingdom of Great Britain.”

“ Whereas by an act of the last session of this present parliament, intituled, An Act to repeal
“ an act, made in the 6th year of the reign of his late majesty King George I. intituled, An Act
“ for the better securing the dependency of the kingdom of Ireland upon the crown of Great Bri-
“ tain, it was enacted, That the said last-mentioned act, and all matters and things therein con-
“ tained, should be repealed: And whereas doubts have arisen whether the provisions of the said
“ act are sufficient to secure to the people of Ireland the rights claimed by them to be bound only
“ by laws enacted by his majesty and the parliament of that kingdom, in all cases whatever, and
“ to have all actions and suits at law or in equity, which may be instituted in that kingdom, de-
“ cided in his majesty’s courts therein finally, and without appeal from thence, therefore, for re-
“ moving all doubts respecting the same, may it please your majesty, that it may be declared and
“ enacted; and be it declared and enacted by the king’s most excellent majesty, by and with the
“ advice and consent of the lords spiritual and temporal, and commons, in this present parliament
“ assembled, and by the authority of the same, that the said right claimed by the people of Ireland
“ to be bound only by laws enacted by his majesty and the parliament of that kingdom, in all cases
“ whatever, and to have all actions and suits at law or in equity, which may be instituted in that
“ kingdom, decided in his majesty’s courts therein finally, and without appeal from thence, shall
“ be, and it is hereby declared to be established and ascertained for ever, and shall, at no time
“ hereafter, be questioned or questionable.

“ II. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That no writ of error or appeal shall
“ be received or adjudged, or any other proceeding be had by or in any of his majesty’s courts in
“ this

Whilst the British senate was earnestly employed in giving and securing freedom to Ireland, and in the ministerial interregnum, which suspended the action of the British government, Ireland was not wholly inactive. The corporation of the City of Dublin presented the following address to the lord-lieutenant:

“ MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,

“ WE, the Lord Mayor, Sheriffs, Commons, and Citizens of the City of Dublin, in common council assembled, unanimously think it our indispensable duty at this time to approach your excellency with our sincere acknowledgements for your prudent and indefatigable regard to the honour and welfare of this country.

“ Your excellency’s early attention to the removal of all doubts relative to the independency of the legislation, and jurisdiction of the parliament of Ireland, the general and æconomical reform introduced into several departments of the state, and the many great and apparent advantages we enjoy, and are likely to experience, from your excellency’s wise, firm, and virtuous administration, must at all times excite and demand the highest expressions of gratitude, and make us earnestly solicitous for the continuance of your government, over a people affectionate to your person, and truly sensible of your honorable intentions.

“ It has been justly observed, that all nations have experienced a period of exaltation as well as of depression.

“ From an ill-judging policy, this kingdom felt the latter; from the well-timed and liberal sentiments which prevail, it is likely to attain the former.

“ We assure your excellency, that the citizens expect the consummation of this great business from a nobleman of independent fortune and principles, equally the friend of Great Britain and Ireland; sensible that their interests are the same, they do most firmly rely on your goodness, that nothing in

“ this kingdom in any action or suit at law or in equity, instituted in any of his majesty’s courts in the kingdom of Ireland; and that all such writs, appeals, or proceedings, shall be, and they are hereby declared null and void to all intents and purposes; and that all records, transcripts of records or proceedings, which have been transmitted from Ireland to Great Britain, by virtue of any writ of error or appeal, and upon which no judgment has been given, or decree pronounced before the first day of June, 1782, shall, upon application made by, or in behalf of the party in whose favor judgment was given, or decree pronounced, in Ireland, be delivered to such party, or any person by him authorized to apply for, and receive the same.”

“ your

“ your power will be wanting to secure to this nation the complete and perpetual enjoyment of commercial and constitutional freedom.

“ In that persuasion, we cannot but represent to your excellency, that as the time is critical and important, no circumstances whatsoever should induce a change, which might prejudice, but cannot benefit this country; and your excellency must be convinced there are situations, in which the yielding even to the finer feelings of the mind, (however amiable in private life) must be considered as political error, and a desertion of public duty.

“ Your excellency will please to receive this address, not as the ordinary and common compliment paid to persons in your high station, but as the language of freemen sensibly alarmed, who highly approve your conduct and revere your virtues; and who will not behold with indifference the moment, which shall terminate your excellency’s administration.

“ In testimony whereof, we have caused the common seal of the said city to be hereunto affixed, this 7th day of March, 1783.”

To this address the following answer was returned:

“ I am too sensible to this address of affectionate regard, to answer it in the common expressions of good-will: my heart is indeed too full; and I truly feel an honest pride in receiving such a testimony of the sense, which the city of Dublin entertain of my zeal to promote the first object of my wishes, the constitutional and commercial freedom of Ireland. To such an object I would gladly sacrifice every private feeling: and as long as I can flatter myself, that my exertions are acceptable to his majesty, or may be serviceable to this kingdom, I will hope that no circumstances will prevent me from continuing to you that proof of my interest in your prosperity, which an unremitting attention to the great lines of an honest government can so truly give. But in every situation, I never can forget how much I owe to your affection; and my constant prayer, my constant object will be, that the honour, pride, and happiness of Ireland, may be perpetual, and that it may be founded on the surest basis of a liberal and constitutional connexion with your sister kingdom.”

In order to gratify the public mind, and to draw it from speculative questions, it was thought adviseable to institute a new order of knighthood, that should give additional lustre to the national consequence, which at this time appeared to be the favorite object of all ranks of people. Letters patent were accordingly passed for creating a society, or brotherhood, to be called,

“ *Knights*

“ *Knights of the Illustrious Order of St. Patrick,*” of which his majesty, his heirs, and successors, were appointed to be sovereigns ; and the lord-lieutenant for the time being, was to officiate as grand master. The following were appointed knights companions of the order, viz. His Royal Highness Prince Edward, his Grace William Robert Duke of Leinster, the Earls of Clanricarde, Antrim, Westmeath, Inchiquin, Drogheda, Tyrone, Shannon, Clanbrassil, Mornington, Courtown, Charlemont, Beccive, and Ely. The Archbishop of Dublin for the time being, was appointed Chancellor ; and the Dean of St. Patrick’s, in like manner, Register ; and Lord Delvin, Secretary.

On the 11th of March, the Knights were invested with due solemnity before the lord-lieutenant at Dublin Castle ; and on the 17th of the same month (being the festival of St. Patrick, tutelar Saint of Ireland,) they were installed. And the ceremonial of the installation was conducted throughout with the utmost regularity, order, and magnificence.

Various speculations had at different periods been set on foot in Ireland for peopling the country by an influx of foreigners, at times when cruelty was inventive to check the population of the aboriginal natives of the soil. But the ill-judged policy of listening to the distresses of foreigners, whilst the more piercing cries of their own subjects were unheard or unheeded, though frequently attempted, has generally failed.

Disputes and dissensions had long subsisted between the aristocratic and democratic powers in the republic of Geneva, which had finally terminated in favor of the former, through the interference of the kings of France and Sardinia, and the cantons of Zurich and Berne. In consequence of which, a number of the citizens of the popular party resolved to quit a country, in the government of which their weight and authority had been totally extinguished.

On this occasion they turned their eyes upon Ireland, and commissioners were accordingly sent by them to Dublin, to consult and treat with that government in relation to their reception into that kingdom. The commissioners, on their arrival, received the greatest personal attention from the people in general, (then all alive to every claim of civil liberty,) but more especially from the different corps of volunteers in the province of Leinster, into several of which, as a mark of respect paid to the cause they came to solicit, they were chosen as members.

Their request, with respect to the admission of their countrymen into Ireland, was eagerly complied with by government, who, with a degree of avidity,

dity, offered them an afylum in that country. Accordingly, the names and numbers of the emigrants from Geneva having been laid before the privy council, they fixed upon a place for their refidence at Paffage, near to the confluence of the rivers Barrow and Suir, in the county of Waterford, in which diftrict a very confiderable tract of land was then fhortly to revert to government; and this it was refolved fhould be appropriated and granted in fee to thefe Genevefe fettlers, and the place named "*New Geneva*."*

The

* The following warrant was iffued by the lord-lieutenant on that occafion :

To the Earl of Tyrone, the Right Hon. John Beresford, the Right Hon. John Blaquiere, K. B. the Right Hon. Henry Theophilus Clements, the Right Hon. John Fofter, the Right Hon. Luke Gardiner, the Right Hon. William Wyndham Grenville, the Right Hon. James Gaffe, David Latouche, Efq. jun. Andrew Caldwell, Efq. Traven Hartly, Efq. Alexander Jaffray, Efq. and Mefieurs G. Ringler, E. Clavier, Du Roveray, E. Gafe, Grenus, and Divernois.

Whereas the Sieur Divernois did, by his memorial of the 27th of September laft, represent unto us, that, in confequence of certain alterations, which had taken place in the political conftitution and government of the ftate of Geneva, a confiderable number of the citizens and inhabitants, attached to the bleffings of a free government, were difpofed, under affurances of the enjoyment of certain privileges and protection, to settle themfelves in this kingdom, to bring with them their property, and to eftablifh here thofe manufactures, which had rendered the citizens of that ftate fo wealthy; and that the fum of fifty thoufand pounds fterling, Britifh money, would be neceffary to enable the firft thoufand emigrants to effect their purpofe, of which a fum, not exceeding one half, to be applied to defray the expences of their journey, and the carriage of their effects; and the remainder to be applied in the building, or providing houfes for their reception: and whereas we did lay the faid memorial before the lords of his majefty's privy council, who, by their refolution of the 27th day of September laft, expreffive of the importance of the object, and the advantages to be fecured to this kingdom by the acceffion of a body of refpectable citizens, and to its commerce, by the introduction of a manufacture fo extenfive and beneficial, and by the immediate acquifition of a very material addition to the national wealth, did unanimoufly request, that his majefty would be graciously pleafed to take the fame into his royal confideration, and to adopt fuch meafures in this cafe, as to his majefty's great wifdom fhould feem meet: and we having tranfmitted the faid memorial and refolution to be laid before the king, his majefty hath been graciously pleafed to fignify his royal approbation of the defign aforefaid, founded upon principles fo truly interefting to juftice and humanity: and of his royal difpofition to induce the faid merchants, artifts, and manufacturers, citizens, or inhabitants of Geneva, to settle in Ireland, under the conviction, that by their civil and religious principles, their induftry, and their loyalty, they would materially contribute to the advantage of this kingdom.

Thefe are, therefore, to pray and to empower you to confult together, and to report unto us what agreements, regulations, warrants, and authorities, will, in your opinion, be neceffary and proper for carrying his majefty's gracious intentions into execution, under the heads following, viz.

1ft. For the grant of a fum of fifty thoufand pounds to certain ftate officers, and to certain of the nobility

The terms insisted upon by the Genevese, previous to their becoming subjects of a new state, were, 1st. That they should be represented in parliament;
2dly.

nobility and gentry of this realm, together with the six commissioners now in this kingdom from the Genevans; the said sum to be granted to them in trust for the use of the Genevans settling in this country, whereof a sum, not exceeding one half, is to be applied to the charges of their journey, and the carriage of their effects, to be distributed by the said commissioners, in such proportion as they shall think equitable, upon the consideration of the circumstances, the character, and the talents of each emigrant: and the remainder to be expended in the building a town, and settling them therein.

2dly. To consider the rights, privileges, franchises, and immunities to be granted to the inhabitants of the said new intended town; and so soon as the general system shall have been submitted to, and approved of by us, then to prepare a draught of a charter, which will be referred to the consideration of his majesty's law servants for their opinion, and afterwards submitted to his majesty for his royal approbation, granting to the said citizens of the New Geneva, the establishment of magistrates, councils, or assemblies, with powers for regulating their internal concerns, in such manner as shall be most agreeable to the laws, under which they lived happily in their own country, and as shall be agreeable to the dispositions of the people, observing nevertheless, that, in no instance whatsoever, such municipal laws, or regulations, be repugnant to the laws of this kingdom; and, in case that it should be necessary to apply to parliament for farther powers for carrying such charters, or purposes, into execution, then to prepare a draught or scheme of such bill or bills, as may be necessary to be submitted to the legislature.

3dly. To consider in what manner a sufficient portion of land shall be secured to the said citizens of Geneva, to examine and recommend with all expedition a situation for their new town, and to consider and prepare every arrangement which may expedite the construction of it, and to report by what mode the persons arriving in this kingdom, shall from time to time be accommodated, until the new town, or a sufficient portion thereof, shall be erected for their reception: as also in what manner the said houses shall be distributed to individuals, or a sufficient portion of ground to those, who may wish to build at their own expence; and in what manner the freedom of the new town shall be secured to such persons having been citizens or inhabitants of Geneva, and possessed of those qualifications of conduct and of morals, upon which the success of this establishment must depend, (as are not yet arrived or naturalized) so that, upon their arrival and naturalization, they shall be entitled to the benefits of the body corporate aforesaid.

And whereas young persons of rank and fortune, from all parts of Europe, resorted to the city of Geneva, to profit from the system of education established there, under professors of eminence in useful and liberal studies and accomplishments; and whereas a school or academy, formed upon the same principles in this kingdom, would forward his majesty's gracious dispositions for the encouragement of religion, virtue, and science, by improving the education and early habits of youth, and would remove the inducements to a foreign education; and being conducted with that attention to morality and virtue, which hath distinguished the establishments in that city, may attract foreigners to reside in this kingdom for the like purpose, we do farther pray and empower you to con-

2dly. That they should be governed by their own laws. The first of these conditions might have been a matter of opinion, and subject to discussion; but the two last were holden to be incompatible with the laws and the constitution of Ireland, and as such totally rejected.

This disagreement between the parties on leading points stopped all further procedure in the business. Some of the Genevese, however, transported themselves into Ireland; but they soon found by experience, that nothing was

considered and digested a plan for a school and academy of education, to be established in the new colony, and to make a part of the constitution hereof, under such institution and regulations, and with such privileges as may best contribute to the ends hereby proposed.

And we do pray and empower, that, after having given these subjects in general the fullest consideration, you do report unto us a particular detail of what shall be thought most fitting to be granted and ordered for the advantage and encouragement of the Genevans settling in this kingdom aforesaid, and for the welfare and prosperity of the new colony, that the necessary representations thereupon may be laid before his majesty without loss of time; so that every facility may be given to the adoption of every measure calculated to give the said citizens of Geneva the fullest proofs of his majesty's royal protection and regard.

Given under our hand and seal of arms, at his majesty's Castle of Dublin, the 4th day of April, 1783,

By his Excellency's command,

S. HAMILTON.

The following letter was soon after received by Mr. D' Ivernois, from Mr. Secretary Hamilton.

SIR,

I am commanded by my lord-lieutenant to acquaint you, that he has signed a warrant to the proper officers to make out the draught of a commission, to be submitted to his majesty for his royal signature, appointing the several noblemen and gentlemen who are to be entrusted with the settlement in this kingdom of the colony of Genevans, as also the draught of a royal letter, granting the sum of 50,000*l.* to those commissioners for that purpose.

His excellency has also given farther directions to the prime serjeant, attorney and solicitor general, to prepare a draught of a grant of a charter of incorporation for the said colony, and draught of such bills to be laid before the parliament at their next meeting, as shall be requisite for effecting the several purposes desired.

His excellency has at the same time commanded me to assure you of his cordial disposition to the new settlement, and of his intention to forward every measure which shall be necessary for the protection and encouragement of the colony, with as much dispatch as the necessary forms in a business of so much importance will admit.

I have the honour to be, with great regard, Sir,

Your's, &c.

S. HAMILTON.

gained

gained by changing their situation ; and most of them, after a short stay, quitted the kingdom.

The reciprocal advantages, which might have accrued to Ireland and the Genevese emigrants, from the proposed settlement, even had it taken place to the fullest extent, could never, it is presumed, have equalled, or been in any degree proportionable to the sanguine expectations some men had been led to form on this subject. It should be considered, first, that the Genevese are, for the most part, mechanics, and that therefore they must have been but ill-suited, from their former habits of life, to the toils of agriculture ; next, that they were to be settled in a part of Ireland where their support must have arisen from their daily labours on the soil, and from their having but few wants of their own to gratify, more than from their ingenuity in forming and constructing a variety of ornamental articles, which the luxury and riches of populous and trading towns can only create a market for. Whether or no this measure of government, had not in fact proved abortive as it did, it is very questionable whether it would ultimately have been productive of any real advantage to that kingdom. Certain, however, it is, government at this time must have entertained the most implicit and unqualified confidence in the steady attachment of the volunteers and people of Ireland to the constitution of their country, or otherwise they never could have levied the large sum of 50,000*l.* upon a very distressed country, to purchase the probable introduction of turbulent and democratic principles, with a thousand self-exiled martyrs to democracy, from the Antibazilican school of Geneva.

Lord Temple did not quit the government till the 3d of June, 1783, when he was succeeded by the Earl of Northington. The reports of an immediate dissolution of parliament, which in fact took place on the 15th of July, 1783, had thrown the whole nation into a new political fever. The armed body of volunteers assumed to themselves, rather than allowed credit to their representatives for having acquired a constitution at least similar to that of Great Britain. They considered, that it would be a disgrace to quit their arms, whilst any benefit to their country could be still obtained by them ; and they now generally bent their thoughts to the improvement of the state of representation of the people in parliament. They had been much encouraged in this pursuit by the spirited addresses of the county of York and of other counties to the commons in favor of reform, as well as by the persevering efforts

of the Duke of Richmond, Mr. *Pitt, and other then popular members, to bring about a reform in the representation of the people in England. Committees of correspondence to this effect were instituted with the most forward and zealous advocates for reform in England, and the letters received from them were circulated with avidity throughout Ireland.†

On the 1st of July, 1783, at a meeting of the delegates from forty-five companies of the province of Ulster, assembled at Lisburne in pursuance of a public requisition (Lieutenant Colonel Sharman in the chair), it was resolved unanimously, That a general meeting of the volunteer delegates of the province of Ulster, on the subject of a more equal representation of the people in parliament, is hereby earnestly intreated, to be held at Dungannon, on Monday the 8th day of September next.

Resolved unanimously, That the following gentlemen (seven to be a quorum) be appointed a committee of correspondence for communicating with the other corps of the province, for taking preparatory steps to forward the

* On the 7th of May, the day after the call of the house, Mr. William Pitt made his promised motion respecting the reform of parliamentary representation. As the mode of proceeding by a committee, proposed last year, had formed one of the principal objections against the reform itself, he thought it more advisable to bring forward some specific propositions: these were,

1. "That it was the opinion of the house, that measures were highly necessary to be taken for the future prevention of bribery and expence at elections.
2. "That for the future, when the majority of votes for any borough shall be convicted of gross and notorious corruption before a select committee of that house, appointed to try the merits of any election, such borough should be disfranchised, and the minority of voters, not so convicted, should be entitled to vote for the county in which such borough should be situated.
3. "That an addition of knights of the shire, and of representatives of the metropolis, should be added to the state of the representation." He left the number to future discussion, but said he should propose one hundred.

The debate continued till near two o'clock, without any novelty of reasoning or diversification of argument. The number of petitioners this year had decreased. Only fourteen counties appeared, and most of the petitions had a very inconsiderable number of names subscribed. The whole amount was said not to reach 20,000. Amongst the converts to the question, appeared Mr. Thomas Pitt and the Lord Advocate of Scotland. The former of these gentlemen made the house an offer of the voluntary surrender of his borough of Old Sarum. The house divided on the order of the day, ayes 293, noes 149.

† These letters were from the Duke of Richmond, Dr. Price, Mr. Wyvil, Dr. John Jebb, Lord Effingham, Mr. Cartwright, and others.

intentions

intentions of this meeting, and for collecting the best authorities and informations on the subject of a parliamentary reform, viz.

Lieutenant Colonel Sharman,	Colonel Rowley,
Captain Black,	Major John Crawford,
Dr. Alex. Crawford,	Lieutenant Colonel Banks,
Major Burden,	Mr. Robert Thompson,
Captain Wad. Cunningham,	Captain Thomas Prentice;
Rev. Mr. Craig,	Lieutenant Tomb.
Dr. Samuel Moore,	

Resolved unanimously, That the following address be published in the public prints :

To the VOLUNTEER ARMY of the Province of ULSTER.

“ FELLOW CITIZENS, —

“ In common with every class of Irishmen, you are sensible, that this kingdom for many centuries might have continued to bear its chains in ignoble and indigent obscurity, had not an army of its citizens, by a great effort, dared to cast them off.

“ That the dignified conduct of that army lately restored to the imperial crown of Ireland its original splendor, to nobility its ancient privileges, and to the nation at large its inherent rights as a sovereign independent state; that by inculcating the glorious spirit of toleration, it has united the once distracted inhabitants of this country into an indissoluble mass, and promoted the most exalted reverence for the laws, are facts that will exhibit a splendid and interesting figure in the annals of the age.

“ From a military institution, so singular in its nature as to comprehend the several gradations of nobles, commons, merchants, yeomen, and mechanics, every substantial good will be expected by wise and virtuous men.

“ They will with honest pride behold in the state an unparalleled combination of the military with the civil character, existing only for the general interests of the community, and prepared, on the purest principles of the constitution, to give efficacy to the wishes of three millions of people.

“ The idea of a well-digested parliamentary reform, has ever experienced a favourable reception in the uncorrupted breasts of Irishmen and of Britons. It has been uniformly looked up to as the true source of public vir-

tue

“ tue and of political falvation, by the first characters theſe kingdoms have
 “ produced. In this age we have ſeen it warmly ſupported by that conſum-
 “ mate ſtateſman, the late Earl of Chatham; and revived by the heir to his
 “ abilities and name, the preſent William Pitt. It has received the ſanction
 “ of the moſt eminent and honeſt men in both houſes of the Britiſh parlia-
 “ ment, of a great number of the moſt reſpectable ſhires in England, and
 “ the volunteer delegates of the province of Munſter, and within theſe
 “ few days, of the unanimous vote of thirty-eight corps, reviewed at Belfaſt.

“ Among the many glorious effects of which a more equal representation
 “ of the people of Ireland would be productive, the following are obvious :

“ The deſtruction of that party-ſpirit, whoſe baneful influence has at all
 “ times been injurious to the public weal; a revival of the native dignity
 “ of the crown, by imparting to each branch of the legiſlature its diſtinct
 “ and proportional weight; and the abolition of that train of courtly merce-
 “ naries, who muſt ever continue to prey on the vitals of public virtue, till,
 “ the balance of the conſtitution being reſtored, the neceſſity for governing
 “ by regular ſyſtems of ſeduction, ſhall no longer exiſt.

“ Then would the conſtituent body regain its conſtitutional control over
 “ its truſtees, and venal majorities would not be found to ſupport the moſt
 “ diſhonorable and pernicious meaſures, in oppoſition to the ſenſe of the
 “ unpolluted part of the legiſlature, as well as contrary to the univerſal wiſhes
 “ of the public, as to the true intent of the inſtitution of parliaments.

“ With due deference for the auguſt body, which we have preſumed to ad-
 “ dreſs, we therefore beg leave to expreſs our wiſhes, that the volunteer dele-
 “ gates of Ulſter would aſſemble with the ſame ſpirit of loyalty, patriotiſm,
 “ and firmneſs, which actuated them on the memorable 15th of February,
 “ 1782: to deliberate on the moſt conſtitutional means of procuring a more
 “ equal representation of the people in the parliament of Ireland, as the only
 “ meaſure, which can give permanency to the late renovation of our conſti-
 “ tution, or reſtore that virtue to the representative body, without which,
 “ though the mere forms of a free government may be preſerved, its ſpirit
 “ muſt inevitably periſh.

“ Signed by order of the meeting,

“ W. M. SHARMAN, Chairman.”

On the ſame day was made, publiſhed, and ſent to the Dungannon dele-
 gates the following report of a committee of correſpondence, appointed by
 forty-

forty-five corps, assembled by public advertisement at Lisburne on the first of July last, for the purpose of obtaining information on the important subject of a more equal representation of the people in the parliament of Ireland.

“ The committee in discharge of the trust invested in them, immediately opened a correspondence with a number of the most eminent and well informed characters in Great Britain and Ireland, and received answers fraught with most valuable information on the subject.

“ Such of them as enter minutely into the business will be submitted to the provincial assembly if thought eligible, considering the length of their detail, and the great delay which their disclosure will unavoidably occasion. If it be more agreeable to the meeting, for the general diffusion of a body of knowledge on so great a political subject, the principal letters will be published by the committee’s secretary ; by which means the dispatch necessary to so great an assembly will be greatly promoted.

“ The Yorkshire Association, so celebrated for its spirit and numbers, meet about the close of the present month, in order previously to receive the decisions of this province.

“ The society for constitutional knowledge in London, in which are enrolled the names of the first characters in England (strenuous labourers in the glorious business of reform in our sister kingdom), have ordered the addresses of the Ulster regiment, and of the forty-five corps, convening the provincial meeting of Ulster, to be entered in their books, published in the prints, and circulated gratis through the kingdom, in order that the exertions of Ireland may give a spur to the spirit of the British nation.

“ The committee is rejoiced to observe, that the English letters are full of expressions of a high sense of the wisdom, spirit, and unanimity, that have characterized the volunteer army of Ireland : and that they all concur in conceiving the present to be the very moment, in which a radical parliamentary reform can best be effected. They universally agree in the idea, that the delegates at Dungannon should enter into a very comprehensive view of the matter, so as the principles of reform may be strongly marked in their resolves : receiving the sanction and concurrence of a general convention of delegates from the four provinces, a coincidence of sentiment in which they hold to be certainty of success.

“ Founded on much deliberation, assisted by the best information they could procure, the committee have ventured to prepare resolutions, comprehending
a general

a general system of ideas on the subject, which they will take the liberty, through their chairman, Lieutenant Colonel Sharman, with much humility, to move in the august body of representatives of the volunteer army of Ulster.

“The committee of correspondence have now only to apologise for their inability to so weighty a charge: happy if their labours shall meet the approbation of their fellow citizens, or tend in the most remote degree to any valuable purpose. They trust, that the spirit of firmness and integrity, which has already restored this ancient kingdom to her rank in the nations, will crown the 8th of September, 1783, as a day which is to form the groundwork of internal emancipation, on a basis as great as that, on which our rights as an independent nation, have been with such rapid success already established.”

The eve of a dissolution, the speculations upon the new elections, and the successful efforts of the patriots in the people's cause, had worked up the elated minds of the volunteers to an enthusiasm for parliamentary reform little short of that, which they had before evinced for free trade and legislative independence. The state and constitution of their House of Commons was fully and fairly set before their eyes even by the most moderate of their leaders. It consisted of three hundred members; sixty-four of them were sent by the counties, the remainder by cities and boroughs. The sixty-four from counties were in some measure, in the option of the people, and about as many more from the cities and boroughs might, by extraordinary exertions of the people, be freely chosen. Upon that calculation, the people by possibility might send one hundred and twenty-eight members to parliament. The other boroughs, which were close or snug, sent the remainder one hundred and seventy-two. These were the property of some few lords and commoners, and being the majority, the House of Commons consequently as it stood was the representative of an aristocracy. It was to that point that government had been long tending. It was their constant object to keep up by means of this aristocratic influence in the commons that oligarchy or monopoly of power in that kingdom, which it was found nothing but an incorporate union possibly could dissolve, and which whilst it lasted was the fatal bane and calamity of that kingdom.

The next public act towards the attaining of this object, was a circular letter for England, composed and agreed upon by the committee of correspondence, and dated from Belfast on the 19th of July, 1783. It was also
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immediately published throughout Ireland; and as it contains the feelings and sentiments of the armed bodies of Ireland, and they had been allowed in both parliaments to speak the genuine sense of the people of Ireland, the historian cannot more faithfully transmit them to posterity than in their own words.

Ordered, That the following circular letter, signed by the secretary in the name of this committee, be forwarded to ——— inclosing a copy of the resolutions of the provincial meeting of volunteers of Munster, and of the proceedings of the forty-five volunteer delegates assembled at Lisburn on the first inst. respecting a parliamentary reform.

To &c.

Belfast, 19th July, 1783.

“ Your attachment to the rights of the people, and to the general prosperity of the British empire, induce us to address you on the present great and momentous occasion.

“ The spirit of freedom, which pervades all ranks of people in Ireland, with the just and wise policy of the British nation, having for ever removed all possible cause of jealousy between the sister kingdoms, and united us to Britain on the basis of equal liberty and similar constitution; it becomes the duty, as it is the interest of each kingdom, to assist the other in their endeavours to restore to its ancient purity and vigor, a decayed, enfeebled, and sickly constitution.

“ In both nations, it is now generally acknowledged, that this great object can be obtained by no other means but by a reform of the representation in parliament. In England, the measure has for the present miscarried, though supported by so many wise, honest, great, and independent men. We trust, however, it has miscarried only for a season, and that the next attempt will prove successful. Ireland has now taken up the idea, and if we shall be so happy as to see success crown our efforts, we think considerable weight will be thereby added to the endeavours of the people in England. The people of the two nations, united in pursuit of the same important object, must be not only powerful, but irresistible.

“ The enclosed papers, which we request you may peruse, will shew how far this country has already gone in determining to procure a more equal representation; the unanimous resolutions of about fifteen thousand volunteers, already declared in a very few weeks, assure us the resolves of the delegates of Ulster, who are to assemble on the 8th of September next, will

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“ be

“ be no less unanimous; and we well know, that what the volunteers (vast
 “ numbers of whom are freeholders) shall determine on, the other freeholders
 “ and people in general, who are not volunteers, will adopt and support, by
 “ every means in their power: the aged fathers cannot differ from their sons,
 “ respecting a matter, on which depends every thing, that either hold dear for
 “ themselves or their posterity.

“ That you may see the very depraved state of our representation, it is ne-
 “ cessary to observe, that out of three hundred members, of which our House
 “ of Commons consists, about two hundred and twenty are returned by bo-
 “ roughs. Those one hundred and ten boroughs are divided into three
 “ classes: 1st. Those, where the right of election is vested in the Protestant
 “ inhabitants at large: 2d. Those, where the right of election is vested in the
 “ chief magistrate, burgeses, and freemen: 3d. Those, where the right of
 “ election is confined to the chief magistrate and burgeses, frequently not
 “ exceeding five or six in number, and seldom above ten or twelve.

“ Almost all the boroughs are either venal and corrupt, or implicitly obe-
 “ dient to the arbitrary will of their respective landlords, who dictate to the
 “ electors in the most absolute manner. Those landlords claim by prescrip-
 “ tion a kind of property in those boroughs, which they transfer by sale like
 “ an estate, and receive from eight thousand to nine thousand pounds for a
 “ borough, and a seat for a borough is generally sold for two thousand pounds;
 “ so that every seven or eight years the borough brings in four thousand
 “ pounds to the patron. Unhappily for Ireland, our counties are also too
 “ much governed by our peers and great men, whose influence over many of
 “ their respective tenants is very great. This consideration has given rise
 “ here to a doubt in the minds of some well-meaning men, as to the pro-
 “ priety of adding to the number of knights of the shire, as generally now,
 “ two great families endeavour to divide between them the seats for the
 “ county, the others remain neutral, or join the independent interest. It is al-
 “ leged, were there six seats for the county, six great families would divide
 “ them, and that to such a combination, the independent freeholders would
 “ not be able to make any effectual opposition.

“ May we now intreat, as a most important favour conferred on us, and
 “ on this kingdom, that you will favor us with your sentiments and advice,
 “ as to the best, most eligible, and most practicable mode of destroying, re-
 “ straining, or counteracting this hydra of corruption borough-influence;
 “ that

“ that we may be enabled to lay your opinion before the provincial assembly
 “ of delegates at Dungannon : and as our last meeting for arranging business
 “ previous thereto, is fixed to be on the 20th of August, we hope you will
 “ be obliging enough to forward your reply, so as to be with us about that
 “ time.

“ Many apologies are due for this long address, and for the very great
 “ trouble we have requested you to take ; but we are young in politics, and
 “ wish for information from men of more wisdom, experience, and abilities.
 “ This however we may venture to assert, that if we can only be directed to
 “ the best mode, the mass of the inhabitants of Ireland is so completely alive
 “ and sensible to the necessity of a well-digested reform, that there cannot re-
 “ main a doubt that what it attempts, in conjunction with the virtuous part
 “ of England, must be effectual.

“ The several matters on which we have requested your opinion are thrown
 “ into one view in the following queries.

“ In order to the purity of parliament, and to restore that constitutional
 “ control, which the constituent body should have over the representative,

“ 1st. Is it necessary that the boroughs, where the elective suffrage is vested
 “ in a few, and which in general are at the absolute disposal of one or two
 “ persons, should be disfranchised, and in their place the county representa-
 “ tives increased ?

“ 2d. The Protestant inhabitants consist of near one million, who return
 “ three hundred members ; would it be wise to increase the number of re-
 “ presentatives for the nation at large ?

“ 3d. A plausible objection, mentioned before, has been made against an
 “ increase of county representatives ; has that argument much weight, and
 “ if it has, is it remediable ?

“ 4th. Should suffrage be extended ; and if it should, who are the proper
 “ objects of such extension ?

“ 5th. In order to guard against undue influence, would it be wise to have
 “ the members returned by ballot ?

“ 6th. Would not a limitation of the duration of parliament, to a shorter
 “ term than eight years, have excellent effects ; and should it be less than tri-
 “ ennial ?

“ 7th. If the abolition of the enslaved boroughs is necessary ; would it be
 “ equitable or expedient that they be purchased by the nation ?

“ 8th. What specific mode of reform in the representation of Ireland best suits your own ideas, considering the situation of this country ; and what are the steps, which you conceive best adapted to effect that reform ?

“ You will be so obliging as to direct your reply to our chairman, Lieutenant Colonel Sharman, at Lisburn.

“ Signed by order,

“ H. JOY, jun. Secretary.”

As soon as the delegates had come to unanimous and strong resolutions upon the necessity and nature of some parliamentary reform before the members were all returned, in order to influence the electors in their choice, and the elected in their obedience to the call and wishes of their constituents, on the 8th of September, 1783, the following resolutions were published, and rapidly and gratuitously circulated throughout every part of the kingdom.

ULSTER VOLUNTEER ASSOCIATION.

At a meeting of two hundred and seventy-two companies of the Volunteer Army of the province of Ulster, by their delegates held at Dungannon, on Monday the 8th of September, 1783,

Colonel JAMES STEWART, of the Tyrone regiment, in the chair,

The following resolutions were unanimously entered into :

I. “ *Resolved* unanimously, That freedom is the indefeasible birthright of Irishmen and Britons, derived from the author of their being ; and of which, no power on earth, much less a delegated power, hath a right to deprive them.

II. “ *Resolved* unanimously, That they only are free, who are governed by no laws, but those to which they assent, either by themselves in person, or by their representatives freely chosen, subject to the control, and frequently returning into the common mass of constituents.

III. “ *Resolved* unanimously, That the majority of our House of Commons is not chosen by the people, but returned by the mandate of peers or commoners ; either for indigent boroughs, where scarcely any inhabitants exist, or considerable cities and towns, where the election franchise is vested in a few, who are thus suffered to place the highest trusts of society against the interest and will of the many, in the hands of men, who seldom act as if they considered themselves accountable for their conduct to the people.

IV. “ *Resolved*

IV. “ *Resolved* unanimously, That by the ancient constitution of parliaments, elections of representatives were for centuries annual, and in many instances more frequent; and the exercise of suffrage among freemen universal.

V. “ *Resolved* unanimously, That every approach to those fundamental principles, tends to a renovation of, not an innovation in the constitution.

VI. “ *Resolved* unanimously, That the elective franchise ought, of right, to extend to all those, and those only, who are likely to exercise it, for the public good.

VII. “ *Resolved* unanimously, That the present inadequate representation, and the long duration of parliaments, destroy that balance, which by our constitution should subsist between the three estates of the legislature, render the Commons House independent of the people, procure certain majorities in favour of every administration, and threaten either an absolute monarchy, or that still more odious government, a tyrannical aristocracy.

VIII. “ *Resolved* therefore, That the present imperfect representation, and the long duration of parliaments, are unconstitutional, and intolerable grievances.

IX. “ *Resolved* unanimously, That as the voice of the commons of Ireland is no less necessary for every legislative purpose, than that of either the king or lords, the people have a just and inherent right to correct the abuses of representation, whenever such abuses shall have so increased, as to rob them of their constitutional share in their own government.

X. “ *Resolved* unanimously, That it is the interest of parliament itself to effect a substantial reform; as the very existence of that assembly must become precarious, when it shall lose the confidence of the people, to whom originally it owed its creation, and from whom alone its powers were derived.

XI. “ *Resolved* unanimously, That we solemnly pledge ourselves to each other and to our country, to seek a speedy and effectual redress of these our grievances, and to co-operate with our fellow subjects, in every exertion necessary to obtain it. We call for the aid of every upright senator, of every man, whether in Ireland or Great Britain, who bears or wishes to acquire the title of a freeman.

XII. “ *Resolved* unanimously, That we have attended with admiration to the noble, though hitherto ineffectual efforts, of those illustrious characters
“ and

“ and virtuous citizens who, in England and Scotland, strenuously labour to
 “ procure redress of similar grievances. May the examples of the sister na-
 “ tions mutually animate the inhabitants of each to persevere with unremit-
 “ ting ardour, till the glorious labour be finally completed.

XIII. “ *Resolved* unanimously, That a committee (of five persons from each
 “ county) be now chosen (by ballot) to represent this province in a grand
 “ national convention, to be held at noon in the Royal Exchange of Dublin,
 “ on the 10th day of November next; to which we trust each of the other
 “ provinces will send delegates, to digest and publish a plan of parliamentary
 “ reform, to pursue such measures as may appear to them most likely to ren-
 “ der it effectual, to adjourn from time to time, and convene provincial meet-
 “ ings if found necessary.

“ The following gentlemen were accordingly chosen by ballot, viz.

DELEGATES.

<i>Antrim.</i>	Lieutenant Colonel A. Stewart
Colonel O'Neill	Colonel Robert M'Clintock
Lieutenant Colonel Sharman	Lieutenant Colonel Charles Nesbitt.
Colonel Rowley	<i>Down.</i>
Captain W. Todd Jones	Colonel Robert Stewart
Colonel T. M. Jones.	Captain Matt. Forde, jun.
<i>Armagh.</i>	Major Crawford
Earl of Charlemont	Col. Pat. Savage
Lieutenant Colonel Brownlow	Captain Gavin Hamilton.
Sir Capel Molyneux	<i>Fermanagh.</i>
Lieut. Colonel Sir Walter Synott	Colonel Irvine
Captain James Dawson.	Colonel Sir Arthur Brooke
<i>Cavan.</i>	Captain A. C. Hamilton
Lord Farnham	Jason Hazard, Esq.
The Hon. J. J. Maxwell	Captain James Armstrong.
Captain Francis Saunderson	<i>Londonderry.</i>
Colonel George Montgomery	Lord Bishop of Derry
Captain Henry Clements.	Col. Right Hon. Thomas Conolly
<i>Donegal.</i>	Col. Right Hon. Edward Carey
Colonel Alexander Montgomery	Captain Lecky
Colonel John Hamilton	Captain Ferguson.
	<i>Monaghan.</i>

Monaghan.

Colonel Charles Powell Leslie
 Colonel Francis Lucas
 Colonel John Montgomery
 Captain William Forster
 Colonel James Hamilton

Tyrone.

Colonel Stewart
 Lieutenant-Colonel Montgomery
 Colonel James Alexander
 Lieutenant-Colonel Charleton
 Captain Eccles.

XIV. “ *Resolved* unanimously, That it be an instruction to said committee, that the delegates from each county do prepare, and carry with them to the national convention, an account of all the cities, towns, and boroughs of this province, the mode of election in such as at present return members to parliament, as near as may be the proportionate number of Protestant and Roman Catholic inhabitants in each, and a conjecture of their comparative properties.

XV. “ *Resolved* unanimously, That we are decided in opinion that the representatives of the people ought not in future to consent to any bill of supply for a longer term than twelve months, nor more than six months, until a complete redress of the aforesaid grievances be obtained.”

The following Address of the First Regiment of Irish Brigade, to the Chairman of this Association, on the 15th of February, 1782, being read :

“ To Colonel WILLIAM IRVINE, Chairman of the Ulster Volunteer Delegates, assembled at Dungannon, February 15, 1782.

“ SIR,

“ I AM directed by the First Regiment of Irish Brigade, to acquaint you, that on the 22d day of last month, at a full meeting of that corps, they unanimously adopted the resolutions of the Ulster delegates assembled at Dungannon, on Friday, the 15th day of February last.

“ To that assembly, unprecedented in the annals of mankind, which is the glory of the present times, and must be the wonder of futurity, Ireland owes her emancipation.

“ Toleration, the offspring of benevolence and wisdom, was no sooner adopted by that illustrious body, than received and cherished through the whole nation, and the inhabitants of Ireland from a divided, became an united people.

“ You, Sir, and the highly respectable body, of which you are chairman, will hear with pleasure of every accession of strength to the volunteer army :

“ I am happy, therefore, to acquaint you, that this regiment, though but four
 “ months

“ months embodied, is numerous and respectable, a circumstance sufficient to
 “ convince the world, that the public virtue of this kingdom daily increases,
 “ and that the glorious flame of liberty blazes through the nation.

“ At this great crisis, when the western world, while laying the foundation
 “ of a rising empire, temptingly holds out a system of equal liberty to man-
 “ kind, and waits with open arms to receive the emigrants from surrounding
 “ nations; we think it a duty we owe to our country, to promote, as far as
 “ our example can reach, an affectionate coalition of the inhabitants of Ireland.
 “ Animated by this sentiment, and convinced that national unanimity is the
 “ basis of national strength, this regiment affords a striking instance how far
 “ the divine spirit of toleration can unite men of all religious descriptions in
 “ one great object, the support of a free constitution.

“ I have the honour to be, Sir,

“ With the highest respect,

“ Your faithful and most obedient servant,

“ JOHN SUTTON, President.

XVI. “ *Resolved* unanimously, That this association entertain the most
 “ grateful sense of the approbation of such liberal and patriotic men as com-
 “ pose that respectable body; that we rejoice in the accession of their abilities
 “ to the common cause, and that we will be happy to co-operate with them
 “ in effecting the complete liberty and happiness of the good people of this
 “ kingdom.

XVII. “ *Resolved* unanimously, That the following address to the volun-
 “ teer armies of the provinces of Munster, Leinster, and Connaught, be
 “ printed with these resolutions.

“ To the VOLUNTEER ARMIES of the Provinces of Munster, Leinster,

“ and Connaught.

“ FELLOW SUBJECTS,

“ THE transcendent events, which our united efforts have
 “ produced, present an eminent instance of the protecting hand of heaven;
 “ whilst the progressive virtue and general union of the people, naturally
 “ prompt them to revive the spirit of an unrivalled constitution, and to vindicate the inherent rights of men.

“ The most important work yet remains, which neglected, our past attain-
 “ ments are transitory, unsubstantial, insecure! an extension to thousands of

“ our

“ our beloved fellow-citizens of a franchise, comprehending the very essence
 “ of liberty ; and drawing the line which precisely separates the freeman from
 “ the slave.

“ Suffer us therefore, to conjure you by every endearing tie, that connects
 “ man with man, with unceasing zeal to pursue one of the most glorious ob-
 “ jects, that ever agitated the human mind : a restoration of virtue to a senate
 “ long unaccustomed to speak the voice of the people ; a renovation of the
 “ ancient balance of your government ; and a firm establishment of the first
 “ gifts of nature, on the ruins of an avowed corruption, at once the bane of
 “ morals and of liberty.

“ From a grand national convention, distinguished by integrity, and in-
 “ spired with the courageous spirit of the constitution, every blessing must
 “ result.

“ With one voice then, the voice of united millions, let Ireland assert her
 “ claim to freedom !

“ Through her four provincial assemblies, let her temperate declarations
 “ flow to one common centre ; and there, matured into an extensive plan of
 “ reform, be produced as the solemn act of the volunteer army of Ireland :
 “ as a demand of rights, robbed of which, the un-animated forms of a free
 “ government would be a curse ; and existence itself, cease to be a blessing.

“ FRIENDS AND COUNTRYMEN,

“ THE eyes of an enlightened world, are this instant upon
 “ us ! Munster has, in part, already led the way : and millions of our fellow-
 “ subjects of Britain, in whom the flame of liberty still burns with lustre, be-
 “ hold with delight our exertions in the common cause ; and in our success,
 “ see the certain harbinges of their own.

“ Let the reflection that Greece, the seat of liberty and of science ; that
 “ Rome, the mistress of the world ; and that innumerable states, once flou-
 “ rishing and free, now lay prostrate by the hand of tyranny : — Teach Ire-
 “ land wisdom. To our deliberative assemblies they convey awful warning to
 “ be spirited, unanimous, and firm ; lest the present wretched condition of
 “ other countries be soon the fate of our own !

“ May the Supreme Ruler of the universe crown his other blessings, by
 “ being present with us, by promoting union and the love of our country
 “ among all ranks of men ; and by finally directing our exertions to virtue,
 “ liberty, and peace.”

A specific plan of parliamentary reform being produced, and read by the committee of correspondence.

XVIII. “ *Resolved* unanimously, That said plan be referred to the consideration of the national convention; and that the thanks of this meeting be presented to Lieutenant-Colonel Sharman, and the gentlemen of the committee of correspondence, for their great trouble in collecting information on a parliamentary reform, and for their abilities and zeal in digesting matter for the meeting of this day.

XIX. “ *Resolved* unanimously, That the thanks of this meeting be presented to the Lord Bishop of Derry, for his attendance and assistance in the business of this day; for his warm attachment to the volunteer cause; and for proving himself the steady friend to the liberties of Ireland upon all occasions.

XX. “ *Resolved* unanimously, That the sincere thanks of this meeting be presented to the inhabitants of Dungannon, for their very polite conduct; and to the Dungannon Battalion, for their vigilant conduct, when on guard this day.

XXI. “ *Resolved* unanimously, That we lament that unavoidable business of consequence, prevented our late chairman, Colonel William Irvine, from attending this meeting; and that the thanks of this meeting be transmitted by our secretary to Colonel William Irvine, for his polite letter of excuse, for his non-attendance this day.

“ JAMES STEWART, Colonel of	} Chairman.
“ the Tyrone Regiment,	
“ JAMES DAWSON, Captain of	} Secretary.
“ the Orier Grenadiers,	

Colonel James Stewart having left the chair, Colonel Robert Stewart, of the First Independent County of Down Regiment, was unanimously called thereto, and having taken the chair accordingly,

XXII. “ *Resolved* unanimously, That the particular thanks of this meeting be presented to Colonel James Stewart, for his very great propriety of conduct in the chair.

“ *Resolved* unanimously, That the thanks of this meeting be presented to our secretary, Captain James Dawson, for his very particular attention and ability

“ ability in the discharge of the duties of his laborious office of secretary to
 “ the volunteer association of this province.

“ ROBERT STEWART, Colonel }
 “ First Independent County } Chairman.
 “ of Down Regiment,

On the 14th of October, 1783, the new Irish Parliament met, when Mr. (now Lord) Pelham, the secretary to Lord Northington, proposed Mr. Pery, who was again elected speaker unanimously. The lord-lieutenant opened the session with the following speech;

“ MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

“ IT is with more than ordinary satisfaction, that, in obedience to his majesty's commands, I meet you in the full possession and enjoyment of those constitutional and commercial advantages, which have been so firmly established by your last parliament. The sacred regard, on the part of Great Britain, to the adjustment made with Ireland at that period, has been abundantly testified by the most unequivocal proofs of sincerity and good faith.

“ It will ever be my wish, as it is my duty, to promote the mutual confidence of both kingdoms, and the uniting them in sentiments as they are in interest, such an union must produce the most solid advantages to both, and will add vigour and strength to the empire.

“ I sincerely congratulate you on the happy completion of his majesty's anxious endeavours to restore the blessings of peace to his faithful people. The establishment of the public tranquillity is peculiarly favorable at this period, and will naturally give spirit and effect to your commercial pursuits. Both kingdoms are now enabled to deliberate with undivided attention on the surest means of increasing their prosperity, and reaping the certain fruits of reciprocal affection.

“ I have the highest satisfaction in acquainting you of the increase of his majesty's domestic happiness, by the birth of another princess.

“ GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS,

“ I have ordered the proper officers to lay the national accounts before you. From thence you will be enabled to judge of the circumstances of the kingdom; and I rely upon your wisdom and loyalty to

“ make such provision as shall be fitting for the honorable support of his majesty’s government.

“ MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

“ THE miseries of an approaching famine have been averted by the blessing of Divine Providence upon the measures, which the privy council advised; the good effects of which were soon visible, in the immediate reduction of the price of grain, and the influx of a valuable and necessary supply to the market. Any temporary infringement of the laws to effect such salutary ends, will, I doubt not, receive parliamentary sanction.

“ Among the many important objects which demand your attention, I recommend to your consideration laws for regulating the judicature of the court of admiralty, and for making a new establishment of the post office.

“ The linen manufacture being the staple of your country, it is needless for me to recommend perseverance in the improvement of that most important article.

“ The fishery on your coasts will claim your attention as a promising source of wealth to this kingdom, and the encouragements granted to it, will, no doubt, be regulated by you in the manner most likely to produce the best effect, and least subject to fraud and imposition.

“ The Protestant charter schools, an institution founded in wisdom and humanity, are also most eminently entitled to your care.

“ I recommend likewise to your attention the proposals adopted by government for providing an asylum for the distressed Genevans. It well becomes the generosity of the people of Ireland, to extend their protection to ingenious and industrious men, who may prove a valuable acquisition to this country, which they have preferred to their own. But in forming this establishment, you will doubtless consider it as a part of your duty to avoid unnecessary expence, and ultimately to secure the utmost advantages to your country.

“ I anticipate the greatest national benefits from the wisdom and temper of parliament, when I consider that the general election has afforded you an opportunity of observing the internal circumstances of the country, and of judging by what regulations you may best increase its industry, encourage its manufactures, and extend its commerce.

“ In the furtherance of objects so very desirable to yourselves, I assure you
“ of

“ of every good disposition on my part ; sensible that in no manner I can
“ better fulfil the wishes and commands of our gracious sovereign, than by
“ contributing to the welfare and happiness of his loyal subjects. With an
“ honest ambition of meriting your good opinion, and with the warmest hope
“ of obtaining it, I have ventured upon my present arduous situation ; and
“ with sentiments pure and disinterested towards you, I claim your advice,
“ and firmly rely upon your support.”

Lord Sudley moved the address of thanks to the crown, and was seconded by Mr. Totnum Loftus ; to which no opposition was given. His lordship moved also on the first day of the session, an address of thanks to the different corps of volunteers in Ireland for their effectual support to the civil magistrates in suppressing all tumults and riots, and preserving peace and good order throughout the kingdom. And it was resolved *nem. con.* that the thanks of that house should be given to the volunteers, for the spirited endeavours to provide for the protection of their country, and for their ready and frequent assistance of the civil magistrate in enforcing the due execution of the laws. And the sheriffs of the different counties were ordered to communicate this resolution to the different corps within their respective shrievalties.

This appears to have been a guarded motion on the part of government, calculated to prevent any other motion, likely to have been dictated by the intemperance of some volunteer member, that might have attributed very different effects to the armed associations, as very different effects were unquestionably produced by them, than the mere suppression of riots : for we read of few that existed from their arming up to that period (except in the south, where they were suppressed by the army.)

On the second day of the session, Mr. Gardiner moved a vote of thanks to the late governor Lord Temple. He said, that this nobleman had received addresses of thanks from every county in that kingdom, for his conduct as chief governor, as each of his public measures carried with it so much wisdom and integrity ; and in his private character he had concurred in every thing tending to the interest of Ireland ; and had laid down such plans, as would have been a national benefit, had he continued in the government of that nation : that he had been addressed from persons of all ranks whatever ; and that nothing but the sanction of this house was necessary to render the thanks of the people of that country universal.

Mr. .

Mr. Cuffe seconded the motion, having been witness to the many anxious days and nights he had spent in preparing plans to promote the welfare of that country, which, had he staid long enough in Ireland to have put in execution, would have been highly approved of.

*Mr. Adderly opposed the motion, and assigned his reasons for dissenting from the vote of thanks. He would be glad to know what good he had done for Ireland; he insisted he had done nothing meritorious. The addresses presented to him were procured by himself.

Sir Henry Cavendish said, he could very well suppose that some gentlemen had opportunities of knowing the integrity and wisdom of Earl Temple; but in his opinion, it was fit the house should have authentic evidence of it before they passed a vote of thanks to Lord Temple, who never met parliament. In his opinion, this question should be postponed for a few days; they would then see whether he had the economical hand, which had been mentioned. Public fame had not spoken of Lord Temple, as he has been spoken of in that house; public fame represented him as a jobber.

Mr. St. George also opposed the resolution proposed, observing, that there were some characters of such a nature, that the less he said about them the better; and he looked upon Lord Temple, as a chief governor, in that light: that with respect to the department, to which he belonged, his lordship left the establishment of the barracks greater than he found it, and under his own new ideas of reform had laid the foundation of a considerable increase of expence

* Three gentlemen only out of the whole House of Commons, stood forth in the invidious light of opposing this vote of thanks. Mr. Adderly assigned as his reason for it, the lord-lieutenant's cruelty in prosecuting him as a defaulter to government, notwithstanding his clerk at the barrack board had owned the embezzlement, and he had promised to make good the deficiency in some few months. The attorney-general, and some others, treated both Mr. Adderly and Sir Henry Cavendish, as debtors to the king. The latter denied it: and Mr. St. George boasted that Sir Henry Harstonge for Cork, Mr. John Beresford for Waterford, Sir Samuel Bradstreet for the City of Dublin, answered for the addresses to Lord Temple being spontaneous and unsolicited. Mr. Adderly, in explanation, confined himself to the addresses of the Roman Catholics: and he said in debate, that he verily believed he was no Protestant, because his carriage had been seen near the door of a Catholic chapel. (2 Parl. Debates, p. 12.) The honorable member was probably more fore at the lieutenant's communications with the crown solicitor, than with a priest in the confessional.

to

to the kingdom under that head : that he admitted his lordship deserved praise for his great assiduity in business ; and he believed he could not be charged with want of integrity to the public ; but that he doubted his wisdom, for he certainly wanted judgment ; that in his opinion, there had not been any lord-lieutenant there during the present century, more unfit to govern that kingdom as a representative of majesty, than Lord Temple ; for he was of an arbitrary disposition ; and if he had remained there long enough to hold a session of parliament, he was confident it would neither have contributed to his honor, or to the prosperity or quiet of the people.

*On the 28th of October, Sir Henry Cavendish moved, that the condition of that country demanded, that every practical retrenchment consistent with the safety thereof, and with the honorable support of his majesty's government, should be made in its expences. This motion brought on a division, which ascertained the force of the opposition, which had been raised against the administration of Lord Northington. The truth of the proposition was admitted on all sides of the house : the regularity of bringing it forward before the national accounts had been examined, was denied by Mr. Mason, and all on the treasury bench, who had been at all conversant with the practices of that house and the public offices : the expediency of it was violently opposed by Mr. Grattan, and such of the patriotic whigs as sided with the present administration. Mr. Flood, on the other side, warmly supported his friend's motion ; though he recommended an amendment in it, by introducing the words, *and that the military establishment in its present state affords room for effectual retrenchment*. If ministers meant economy, they would agree with that amendment ; if not, (alluding to the lord-lieutenant's speech) they meant to amuse them only with idle words.

Sir Edward Newnham was remarkably violent in the debate ; asserting, that the British ministry had taken the royal closet by assault, under the pretence of economy, and lessening the undue influence of the crown ; they had deceived the people : for in Ireland, their substitutes proved the friends of prodigality, and enemies to economy : in power, their sentiments and actions were the very reverse of what they were when out of power. The hypocrisy was too daring. This debate became so personal and over heated between the two rival patriots, Messrs. Flood and Grattan, that they were both ordered into

* 11 Journ. Commons, p. 35.

custody, in order to prevent any mischievous consequences of their unhappy difference. Their personal invectives were illustrative of many traits of the Irish government.* The division was, for the motion 27, against it 84 : a majority of 57 in favor of government.

On the 3d of November, 1783, Mr. Flood returned again to the necessity of retrenchment in the military establishment, as the only solid ground of œconomy. To reduce the civil list, he contended, would be frivolous, pitiful, and undeserving the name of œconomy, and therefore ought to bring contempt on such, as would venture to rest solely there. Not that he thought the civil list ought to escape the pruning hand of that house, for every little would help : but so materially did their then expenditures exceed their income, that the whole civil list being struck off, would by no means equal them ; to begin with that therefore was ridiculous : that that was the proper time for entering on the discussion, no man could deny : if they waited till the committee of the supply sat, they would be told, it was too late. So rapid and constant too had their extravagance been, that no time should be lost in interposing on behalf of their distressed country. In the year 1755 they were not in debt : in the beginning of the late war, they were not in debt. At the conclusion of the war, they owed but 500,000*l.* yet in the time of peace, they quadrupled that debt, notwithstanding the people and manufactures were burthened with new and excessive taxation. Their revenue had increased, and their debts had kept pace with it : since the augmentation was voted, such had been regularly the course of things. Let the virtue then of 1783, correct the abuses of 1720. The causes had originated in the breach of faith of the minister of that day : a man as able as he was crafty : a man who wanting natural, had substituted pecuniary influence ; who unconnected with Ireland, had great native connexions to oppose : thus situated, he at first carried his ideas so far, that he applied for an augmentation of 20,000 men : but that was so truly laughable, that it was scouted. This unreasonable plan was reduced to 15,000 men ; but foreseeing, that it would not be easy to carry even that point at one stroke, he artfully introduced a resolution, that 12,000 men were necessary for the defence of the country, knowing that we dared not meddle with the 3500, which we had always paid for England.

* They are given as reported in the second volume of the Parliamentary (Irish) Debates, Append. No. LXX. They exhibit a curious spectacle of two such great orators descending into the most pitiable and invidious personalities.

Thus

Thus did they become dupes to his ambition, and were faddled with an army of officers, not privates ; an army of expence, not of use ; an army of the minister, not of the people. Then the report of the committee in 1768, stating the burthenfome military establishment as the cause of the great national inability and distress, having been read by the clerk, Mr. Flood moved, " That an humble address should be presented to his majesty, stating the same, and that since an augmentation had taken place, additional burdens had been laid on, by which they had been prevented from making any effectual retrenchment, but had much increased the expence of the nation."

Mr. Denis Browne entirely coincided in the motion of the Right Honorable gentleman, and if ministers should oppose that great æconomical measure, it must appear to that house, that their intentions and declarations were widely different : and he had no doubt but many respectable gentlemen, whom he saw disposed to concur with the administration, would abandon it.

The attorney general spoke strongly against the motion, as did also Sir John (now Lord) Blaquier, Mr. Ogle, Sir Hercules Langrishe, Mr. Conolly, the provost, and several others : amongst whom in particular the recorder referred to the volunteers, whom he now strongly recommended to return to their occupations. Was garrison duty and other military service to be forever thrown upon the volunteers ? Were agriculture, the shuttle, and the loom, for ever to remain neglected ? No : let the volunteers have rest, and return to their occupations. They had used their arms in their country's service, and, he had no doubt, would keep them bright and ready to support the law and constitution of their country when attacked.* On the other

* The Duke of Portland was by many accused of not wishing well to Ireland, and not acting fairly by her or Great Britain with reference to the 100,000*l.* granted for raising the 20,000 seamen for the British navy : he was charged with employing a great part of that money in raising fencible regiments, to bring into disrepute the volunteers ; and on that account Mr. D. Browne moved the House of Commons on the 1st of November, that the proper officers should be ordered to lay before the house an account of the expenditure of that sum of money, with the agents receipts for the same. This was afterwards denied by Mr. Yelverton, attorney general, on the 29th of November, who said, that from the investigation of the accounts of the expenditure of the 100,000*l.* it turned out, that the insinuation of part of it being applied to raise fencible regiments was false. To which Mr. Flood replied, that he had good reason to believe, that men were enlisted for the navy, and were afterwards turned over to fencible regiments, and that they were suffered to retain their bounty money, which was the same thing as if the money had been given to them in the first instance. 2 Parl. Deb. p. 224.

hand, Mr. Corry, Mr. Browne of Trinity College, Mr. Parsons, Mr. Gardiner, and others spoke strongly for the motion: they called upon ministers to act up to their boasted professions of œconomy: that peace was the only moment, when they could with propriety reduce the military establishment, and then they ought to do it, unless they intended that kingdom merely as a barrack to Great Britain. Mr. Flood spoke a second time in the debate, which ended with Mr. Grattan's reply, who rose to speak once more on this subject, which had been so frequently before the house. The question is, said he, will you withdraw from the common cause, that quota of troops, which hitherto you have maintained? Are the circumstances of the country such as you think demand it, and if you are crazy enough to think so, will his majesty assent to that opinion? There never was a time, when he could make reduction with a worse grace, because this country is now as eminently happy in trade, as Britain is the reverse.

In 1769 England possessed, almost unrivalled, the trade of all the world. She possessed America, and owed one hundred and fifty millions less than she owes at present. Ireland had no trade at all, and her constitution was denied; yet at that day it was thought wise to augment the army; and shall we reduce it now, when we have obtained a free constitution, a free trade? When we have obtained a judge's bill, a limited mutiny bill, an *Habeas Corpus* bill? When every thing that we have demanded, has been conceded? Shall we in that moment withdraw our quota of troops? Before she obtained these advantages we said to Britain, that provided she would acknowledge our constitutional and commercial rights, we would stand or fall with her. And when they have been acknowledged to the full satisfaction of every man, it is proposed to withdraw the support of our army. Suppose, instead of saying we will stand or fall with Great Britain, we had said, "and when those things shall be done (when our rights shall be acknowledged and established), we will then in return, withdraw from you the support of our army;" and yet in effect, this is the proposal at present made. I do not entirely agree in all that has been said of gratitude; we owe no gratitude but for the plantation trade; but this we owe to England, and to our own honour, that we should not depart from an old covenant. The navy of England protects our trade, and we, as an equivalent, pay 70,000*l.* a year to maintain the troops destined to serve in the plantations. This is not a dear purchase for partaking that, which has cost England so many millions. Has success
made

made us niggardly, and shall we become unkind to England, just at the moment she has shewn kindness to us? We have indeed held out the language of magnanimity to England, and shall we fail in the performance? No; there are many other places to make retrenchment, we grant a pension list of 80,000*l.* a year, yet complain of 70,000*l.* paid to an army; paid for the protection of the British navy. We may indeed make very great reductions in the army extraordinaries. We may make great reductions in the revenue department, and in others. Those reductions will, I trust, far exceed the pay of our augmentation. These are retrenchments that ought to be made; but the number of our forces ought not to be diminished.

On the question being put, there appeared a majority of 74 against the question; ayes 58, noes 132.

On the 10th of November Sir Henry Cavendish again brought forward his motion, that the condition of that kingdom required every practicable retrenchment consistent with the interest and safety thereof, and with the honor and dignity of his majesty's government. Mr. Macon seconded the motion, and Mr. Attorney General gave it his hearty concurrence, now that the national accounts had been examined. And as the speaker was about to put the question, Mr. Flood said, he had an amendment to propose; the motion as it stood at present, was giving too great a latitude to administration; it was leaving them to pursue any measure they thought proper, they had only to say, that it was for the interest of the nation, or for the dignity of his majesty's government. He therefore moved for the following amendment, "and that the military establishment in particular will admit of a considerable retrenchment, inasmuch, as 12,000 men are at present sufficient, not only to maintain the defence of this kingdom, but also to afford Great Britain, for her service abroad, as many men as we granted to her by the augmentation; and inasmuch as many important savings may be made in the expence of maintaining that number of 12,000 men;" he observed, that certainly ingratitude could not be objected to the motion, since they were not about to withdraw their aid from Great Britain, but to allow her as many men out of 12,000 men as they formerly did out of 15,000 men; and surely there was more generosity in giving three out of twelve, than three out of fifteen.

This amendment brought on a very long and warm debate, in which General Luttrell and Major Doyle and some other military gentlemen spoke

strenuously in support of the army, which had been mentioned in a very invidious manner, and placed in an ungracious comparison with the volunteers. *On the division, 65 were for the amendment, and 143 against it. Then the original motion of Sir Henry Cavendish was put and unanimously carried. On the same day, when the attorney general put one of his official motions, namely, "that the supply to be granted to his majesty to commence the 25th of December, 1783, continue for 15 months, that is, until the 25th of March, 1785," Sir Edward Newnham said, it was the general sense of the nation, that the money bills should not exceed the term of six months, and he accordingly moved, that the word *six* should be substituted for fifteen. Mr. Hartley seconded the motion, as he had been instructed by his constituents to vote for no bill of supply for a longer term than six months, until the great national measures then pending were decided: on this division 32 were for and 92 against the amendment.

Mr. Grattan having opposed the retrenchment in the military establishment, and having uniformly avowed his principles of œconomy, on the next day moved for a committee to enquire into the expence of collecting the revenue; and said he was convinced it was an object of retrenchment, as though there were an increase in the revenue last year of 150,000*l.* it would have been much more, if the collection had not amounted to 16½ per cent. and he was certain, that it could be collected at an expence of 10 per cent.

Mr. Beresford assured the house, that the more minutely the accounts of the revenue department were inspected, the greater would be his satisfaction, and that of the gentlemen, with whom he had the honor to sit at the revenue board; however, the amount of the collection, though much greater than he wished, was not so great as the Right Hon. gentleman had stated, for in it he had included the incidental expences of the custom-house, and great works then carrying on; were these deducted, the expence of collection would not amount to 14 per cent. though formerly it had been 18: besides, in comparing that country with England, gentlemen had fallen into a mistake. A single great distiller in England, paid more duty than a whole county there, though he required but one officer to watch him, and the country perhaps forty. He said, there were twenty-six ports in Ireland, of which nineteen did not produce a revenue equal to the expence of guarding them; and

* 11 Com. Journ. p. 94.

the whole balance in the public favor, arose from seven ports, Dublin, Cork, Waterford, Belfast, Limerick, Derry, and Newry, though the necessity of watching the inferior ports must be obvious to every man. It was said, that in England the revenue was collected at seven per cent. but of those seven ports, that had been mentioned, the revenue was collected at five and nine-tenths per cent. The manner of estimating the expence of collecting in England, and comparing with Ireland, was unfair; England was a market for the whole world, goods imported there paid heavy duties, for the purpose of re-exportation: when those duties were drawn back, that increased her fictitious revenue, though it did not add one farthing to the real one; and that reduces the relative proportion of expence in the collecting.

The revenue board of Ireland, which was originally constituted for revenue business only, had the business and expences of the whole state heaped upon it. The expence of passing bills, and sundry circumstances of the law business, had raised that particular charge from 1800*l.* per annum to 4800*l.* The revenue cruisers, which government employed for convoying troops, had in the last year stood in 32,000*l.* which was charged as a revenue expence. Nay, the very expresses, which government sent to different places on government affairs, were paid by the revenue board. Those things together made a prodigious sum, and it was all charged to the prodigality of the commissioners of revenue, who were blamed for expences, in which they had no manner of concern. The revenue incidents had many improper charges upon them; and salaries, which if they ought to appear any where, ought to appear upon the establishment.

Mr. Grattan said, he thought the Right Hon. gentleman had very candidly explained to the house the condition of that department. As to the incidents, which increased the expence of collecting, not by industry but by idleness, they should be curtailed at present, and guarded from abuse in future; for if people who had salaries on that list, were placed on the pension list, parliament would see them, and strike them off. But as at present circumstanced, the revenue incidents might be called a concealed pension list.

Sir John Parnel admitted there were many abuses in the revenue department; that department was under a particular control, but he rejoiced that that control was under the control of parliament. He recommended to the country gentlemen to teach their tenants obedience to the revenue laws, as there was amongst all ranks of people a disposition to oppose them.

So.

So unwearied was the present opposition in pressing military retrenchments upon the house, that they omitted no opportunity during the session of bringing it forward, but always with the like failure of success. Their party consisted of about one sixth of the house, and as usual, few or none were moved from their ranks by eloquence, argument, or reason. When on the 13th of November Mr. Foster had reported the different resolutions from the committee of supply, which the house unanimously agreed to, Sir Edward Newnham again attempted to urge the granting of the supplies for six months, when Mr. Grattan observed, that the question had been already debated and decided, and nothing new was then offered; on which Sir Edward Newnham remarked, that there was a time, when the Right Hon. gentleman and he coincided in opinion, and he was sorry to find, that they then differed so widely. Mr. Grattan replied, that their differences were less, than apprehended: let but parliamentary reform be tacked to the money bill, and he would agree to it.

When the protecting duties were brought before the house, they were not supported by government in the way, which the half-starved unemployed manufacturers expected: they had been taught to consider them essentially necessary for the support of trade: they flocked round the parliament house in anxious expectation of the protecting duties being established in their favor. Government took great offence at the concourse of people crowding the avenues to the house, and considered that assemblage brought thither by opposition to intimidate. It was however observed from the opposition bench, that the people came thither as supplicants, not as rioters, and they ought to meet the protection of every man in that house: but apprehensions were conceived, that the disposition to postpone the business foreboded no good: if it went over the recess, it would be heard of no more. When Mr. Gardiner, on account of whose illness the committee of ways and means had been kept open for the purpose of receiving his proposition for the protecting duties, appeared in the house on the 20th of November, he observed, that he was convinced, that the business must gain ground by delay, for every enquiry would add strength to the reasons for its expediency. He therefore requested his Right Hon. friend (Mr. Foster) would adjourn the committee until Monday. In what he proposed he was far from having any idea of prohibitory duties, he only wanted restrictive duties, and those only on such articles as could be manufactured in Ireland.

He

He took that occasion to advert to the conduct of people out of doors, who had filled the avenues of the house, as if to intimidate its members: he had sent to them, and declared what he then did, that if such improper conduct were persisted in, he had done with the business; and he had the pleasure to find, that the master manufacturers had entered into very strong resolutions for preventing a repetition of such unwarrantable behaviour.

Mr. Hartley* informed the house, that a great number of weavers had waited

* The popular spirit and wishes appear at this time to have been strongly with the opposition, as appears from the fate of a petition from the chamber of commerce respecting the importation of tobacco, presented by Mr. Hartley to the House of Commons on the 24th of November, 1783, when the government side of the house, and particularly Mr. Fitzgibbon, urged that the house could take no cognizance of the petition of a body of men, styling themselves, *A Council of a Chamber of Commerce*, a title utterly unknown to the house, either as a chartered or a corporate body. Most of the leaders of the opposition were for receiving the petition. (2 P. D. p. 207, and 11 Com. Journ. p. 136.) At length Prime Serjeant Kelly rose and said, " I feel myself extremely hurt by some gentlemen making any distinction between one side of the house and the other; I say place ought to make no difference, and I trust there are honorable men on both sides. I am also hurt at hearing a minister's majority mentioned, no man who has not the merits of the question with him can have a majority: I hope it will never be presumed, that a majority can be obtained in any other way. For my part, though I hold an office under government, I never will object to this petition for the style; there is no fault in the style; here is a select body of men, called the chamber of commerce; the use of names is to know, who the persons petitioning are, in case of any impropriety we may call them before us. To this petition we have the name of an honorable member of this house, he is answerable for it, it is acknowledged to be a matter of importance, and shall we for mere matter of form reject an important petition so well authenticated? No, though I am on this side of the house, and will support government in every honorable measure, and in none but honorable measures, I will receive this petition; no power on earth shall prevent me." (Here a loud clapping of hands taking place, the gallery was ordered to be cleared. As soon as that order was complied with, and the house was cleared,)

Mr. Fitzgibbon warmly censured the indecent conduct of the gallery, and moved, that the house should enter into a resolution, " That a gross and indecent outrage, by clapping of hands, having been committed this night by the strangers admitted to the gallery, resolved, that the serjeant at arms do from time to time take into his custody any stranger or strangers, that he shall see or be informed of to be in the house, while any committee of the whole house, or the committee of privileges is sitting, and that this order should be strictly enforced." The motion was supported by a great number of the treasury side, and opposed by the other part of the house as strenuously.

Mr. Flood, who came in late, was an able advocate for the admission of constituents to hear their debates,

waited on him, and assured him the violence complained of did not proceed from them, but gave him to understand, that they were set on by persons enemies to the measure in question.

The great outcry of the opposition against Lord Northington's administration was, for acts instead of professions of œconomy. Mr. Flood was their leader, and they were joined by many persons of great personal talent, influence, and property. They differed also from the generality of the ministerialists upon the subject of the volunteers: government considered the armed associations of the volunteers to have performed their mission, and that they then ought to disarm and disband. Opposition looked to the attainment of further rights or liberties, and considered the influence of the volunteers as necessary to procure the future, as they had been instrumental in acquiring the former.* The next popular question, which they urged was a reform in the representation of the people. In consequence of the resolutions of the Dunganon meeting, on the 8th of September, 1783, delegates were appointed to form a grand national convention, which assembled at Dublin on the 10th of November, when the Earl of Charlemont was nominated their chairman. They proceeded to enquire into the most eligible system of parliamentary reform, and having entered into a variety of resolutions expressive of their sentiments on that subject, they requested, that Mr. Flood would introduce a

debates, and declared, that if gentlemen were not ashamed of their conduct, they had nothing to fear from its being known, and that it was unreasonable and unjust to preclude all from the galleries for the intemperate conduct of a few.

The motion was then carried,

Ayes	—	157
Noes	—	72

* The opposition stuck fast to the retrenchment of the military, disdaining the petty savings that were to be made in the civil establishment. Mr. Molyneux had indeed on the 22d of November (as he said himself upon his own free motion) moved for and carried a vote of the House of Commons for an additional salary of 4000*l.* per ann. to the lord lieutenant: there were 77 for and 54 against it. Mr. Grattan found himself called upon by the principles of œconomy, which he had ever maintained, to take some active step towards forwarding that necessary system, especially after he had opposed Mr. Flood and his friends frequent motions for military retrenchment. On the 26th of the month, when Mr. Grattan moved to take into consideration all practical retrenchments in the collecting of the revenue, he said he should strenuously have opposed Mr. Molyneux's motion had he been in the house. It is to be observed, that Lord Northington declined accepting of the addition.

bill

bill for that purpose into the House of Commons. It has been said, that the government was at first seriously alarmed at this meeting of the national convention, and that a privy council was summoned to determine on the propriety of arresting both the chairman and secretary of the meeting; but the measure having been considered as hazardous, another expedient was adopted: It was artfully contrived to divide the opinion of the assembly respecting the extension of certain privileges to Roman Catholics; and the common interest and sentiment of the people in general being thus disunited, the efforts of the convention became less formidable, and all means were devised to oppose and decry them in parliament.

*On the 29th of November, 1783, Mr. Flood moved for leave to bring in a bill for the more equal representation of the people in parliament. This was immediately opposed by the attorney general. “ I do not mean (said he) “ to go into the discussion of the bill, but I would wish the honorable member would now state the necessity there is for bringing it in at all, and also, “ who those persons are, who are discontented with the present constitution, “ and with whom it originates: for I will say, if it originate with an armed “ body, it is inconsistent with the freedom of debate for this house to receive “ it. We fit not here to register the edicts of another assembly, or to receive “ propositions at the point of the bayonet: I admire the volunteers, so long “ as they confine themselves to their first line of conduct; it was their glory “ to preserve the domestic peace of their country, and to render it formidable “ to foreign enemies: it was their glory to aid the civil magistrate, and to “ support their parliament; but when they turn aside from this honorable “ conduct; when they form themselves into a debating society, and with “ that rude instrument the bayonet, probe and explore a constitution, which “ requires the nicest hand to touch, I own my respect and veneration for “ them is destroyed. If it shall be avowed, that this bill originated with “ them, I will reject it at once, because I consider that it decides the question, whether this house, or the convention, are the representatives of the “ people, and whether parliament, or the volunteers, be to be obeyed. I “ consider it as a question involving the existence of the constitution; and it “ is in vain, whatever may be avowed or pretended, to shut our ears and “ eyes, to what every one has seen and heard, armed men walking bare-

* 2 Parl. Deb. p. 353, &c.

“ headed through the streets under a military escort, courting the smiles
 “ and applauses of the multitude, and meeting in the pantheon of divinities,
 “ the rotunda, for we are told it is blasphemy to utter a word against them;
 “ forming committees and sub-committees; receiving reports and petitions,
 “ and going through all the mockery of parliament. It is in vain then to
 “ pretend, that this bill is not their mandate; and can any man, who has the
 “ least regard for that constitution, which our ancestors purchased with their
 “ blood, bear to see government forced from its centre by these reformers?
 “ I think the time is now arrived, things are come to such a crisis, that even
 “ our self-preservation, as a parliament, depends on the vote we shall now
 “ give. This is the spot to make our stand, here we must draw our line; for
 “ we have retired step by step, as they have advanced: we are now on a pre-
 “ cipice; and to recede one step more, plunges us into inevitable ruin.

“ Sir, I lament, for the honor of my countrymen, that they should have
 “ chosen this period for introducing innovation, or exciting discontent.
 “ What is the occasion, that calls forth their displeasure against the constitu-
 “ tion, and what is our present situation? Blessed with a free trade and a free
 “ constitution, our peers restored to their rights and to their lawful authority,
 “ our judges rendered independent, the manacles fallen from our commons,
 “ all foreign control abolished, we take our rank among nations, as a free
 “ state; and is this a time to alter that constitution, which has endured
 “ so many storms, and risen superior to all oppressions? Will the armed asso-
 “ ciations, wise as they may be, be able to form a better, though they reject
 “ this? Before they have for a single session entered into the enjoyment of
 “ it, like children, they throw away the bauble, for which with all the eager-
 “ nefs of an infantine caprice, they have struggled; or like spendthrifts,
 “ they would make away with their inheritance, before they enter into posses-
 “ sion of it. But I will say to the volunteers, you shall not throw from you
 “ the blessings you may possess under your happy constitution, cultivate
 “ your own prosperity, and enjoy the fruits of your virtue, beat your swords
 “ into ploughshares, return to your different occupations, leave the business
 “ of legislation in those hands, where the laws have placed it, and where you
 “ have had ample proof it will be used for the advantage of the country.
 “ But, Sir, it is in vain on the part of the convention, to disclaim their in-
 “ tent of overawing the parliament; nay, I am told their session is not yet
 “ prorogued, and perhaps they may meet on Monday to reverse the opinion,
 “ which

“ which this house may give this night. Sir, I call upon the house to exert
 “ their spirit, and vindicate their rights; I shall call upon them in the words
 “ of a great man—‘ *Expergiscimini aliquando et capeffite rem.*’

“ I appeal to the candour of gentlemen: are they sure they come into par-
 “ liament to deliver their sentiments as freely as they would do, if they were
 “ not members of the convention? Or will gentlemen who are not, vote as
 “ free? Is it decent, while the convention are watching to controul our ac-
 “ tions, to enter into any subject that they can propose? I have the highest
 “ respect for the volunteers as men, and for their former actions; but if the
 “ question appear to the house, as it does to me, the result of any resolution
 “ formed at that meeting, it is our duty to reject it with indignation.”

Mr. Flood said, he had not mentioned the bill as being the bill of any set of men, or any body of men whatsoever. He was as free to enter into the discussion of that bill as any gentleman in the house, and with as little prepossession in favor of what he should propose. He preferred it to the house, as the bill of his right honorable friend who seconded him. Would the house receive it from them? In the last parliament it was ordered, that leave be given to bring in a bill for the more equal representation of the people in parliament. This was in the Duke of Portland's administration; an administration which the right honorable gentleman professed to admire, and which he would not suspect of overturning the constitution. Armed with the authority of that precedent, he little thought any one would be so desperate as to give such a violent opposition to the simple introduction of a bill. He then rose for the first time, to speak upon the subject, and called upon every man, auditor, or spectator, in the house, or in the galleries, to remember this truth; that if the volunteers were introduced into this debate, it was not he who had done it.

The right honorable gentleman says, if the volunteers have approved, he will oppose it: but I say, I bring it in as a member of this house, supported with the powerful aid of the right honorable gentleman, who sits behind me, (Mr. Brownlow): we bring it in as members of parliament, never mentioning the volunteers. I ask you, will you receive it from us, from us your members, neither intending by any thing within doors, or without, to intimidate or overawe you? I ask, will you receive it as our bill; or will you conjure up a military phantom of interposition to affright yourselves? I have not introduced the volunteers; but if the volunteers are aspersed, I will defend their conduct against all the world. By whom were the commerce and constitution

of this country recovered? By the volunteers. Why did not the right honorable gentleman make a declamation against them, when they lined our streets; when parliament passed through ranks of those virtuous armed citizens, to demand the rights of an insulted nation? Are they different men at this day; or is the right honorable gentleman different? He was then one of their body; he is now their accuser. He who saw the streets lined, who rejoiced, who partook in their glory, is now their accuser. What has changed them since that time? Are they less wise, less brave, less ardent in their country's cause? Or has their admirable conduct made him their enemy? May they not say, we have not changed, but you have changed? He cannot now bear to hear of volunteers: but I will ask him, (and I will have a starling taught to halloo it in his ear,) Who got you the free trade; who got you the constitution? Who made you a nation? The volunteers. If they were the men you now describe them, why did you accept of their service? Why did you not then accuse them? If they were so dangerous, why did you pass through their ranks, with your speaker at your head, to demand a constitution? Why did you not then fear the ills you now apprehend? Have your lord-lieutenants refused the service of those men? Look back to their offers in Lord Carlisle's administration. Have not such of them as could obtain that honour, been proud to be escorted by them to sea! And has not parliament returned repeated thanks to this body of men, who are now so degenerated, that rectitude becomes depravity in them? Were not resolutions sought from them to give a sanction to the inadequate security of simple repeal? When betrayed into wrong, they were cherished; now, when right, they are opposed.

What do some of the greatest men in England say, (speaking of the volunteers) "That the history of mankind, the annals of the world do not furnish such another glorious example of patriotism and moderation?" And now will any man condemn them, if they wish to crown themselves with never fading glory, and finish their labours by rendering perfect that constitution, which their labours have acquired? Should you comply, it would forever render unnecessary the interference of such bodies of men as they are. I am conscious, that I have not done justice to that much honoured, and much injured body of men; but be it remembered, that it was not I who introduced their name; it was not I who wished to inflame your passions, when I had not arguments to support me: it was not I who wished to debauch them on the side of fear: such a proceeding shews the rottenness of the cause. If
the

the volunteers and the parliament shall ever be committed, (which God Almighty forbid) no great thanks will be due to those men, who represent the volunteers as endeavouring to dragoon parliament. Men who endeavour to exasperate them, and if their moderation were not greater than the wisdom of their accusers, great and miserable would be the confusion indeed; but they have too much wisdom not to despise their accusers; though I will tell the man, who accuses them, that there was a time, when he was proud to join in their ranks, and share the glory of their conduct.

I am called on for an explanation of my plan of reform, in order that exceptions may be taken to it; but I am ready to explain it, and to refute all exceptions on the ground of reason and argument. As in this house votes go by tale, and not by weight; and as the vote of the meanest wretch that ever disgraced the walls of parliament, though representing the most venal borough, tells for as much as the most illustrious character, representing the first county in the kingdom; the people wish to correct the ill-effects of this, by opening the boroughs, and giving them an opportunity of being virtuous. This is the voice of the people, and it is opposed because it is the demand of the volunteers; but the volunteers and the people are the same; they have been made constitutional by every act, but that of being placed on your establishment, which they despise. Does any man say, that there is not a positive act of parliament, directing every protestant to bear arms? And will you say, that because one man fulfils more of his duty, as a citizen, than another, that he should less enjoy a citizen's privilege? Or will any man say, that because the volunteers, in obedience to the laws, bear arms, therefore that obedience should strip them of their franchise.

But who will deny, that the representation of cities and boroughs demand reform? And are plans of reform to be rejected, because agreeable to the volunteers? If so, how came the Duke of Portland to send volunteer delegates to the throne with letters to deliver into the sacred hand of majesty? -And if the Duke of Portland acted thus, will any man say, that the volunteers have since done any thing to transform them into the Gorgons and hydras they have been represented? No, they are not changed, they are seen through the medium of borough interest; it is this, that has given them this terrible aspect; it is the sordid interest of a prostituted government to say they have strength, though it be the strength of borough-mongers; but it is the strength of a virtuous government to be supported by the public good opinion; and it is no credit

credit to any government to depend rather on a venal parliament, than on the honest voice of an ingenuous nation. The bill sets at defiance all objection; for is there a man who will say, however political declamation may attempt to mislead, that the constitution wants no reform? Will any man say, that that constitution is perfect, when he knows that the honour of the peerage may be obtained by any ruffian, who possesses borough interest!

Mr. Flood then proceeded to trace the general outline of the plan of reform agreed to at the convention; and concluded with saying: I shall neither endeavour to intimidate nor overawe the house: but, on the contrary, I shall most humbly hope, that in the infancy of your liberty, whilst a body of freemen and citizens, who are determined to treat with respect that constitution, which they have recovered by fortitude, bear arms for their country's service, you will not go to fish for objections, until these people shall do something derogatory from that authority, which they have established; no body of men can make me affirm to be right what I know to be wrong; neither will I be so absurd as to deny that, which I know to be right, because other men think so too.

Scarcely a member, who had ever opened his mouth in the house, was silent on this important occasion: the debate lasted till past three o'clock on the Sunday morning. Several of the members, who admitted the necessity of the reform, voted against it under the circumstance of the sitting of a national convention of delegates, who had previously agitated the question, and were waiting the result of its discussion in parliament. This was the first blow given to the credit and power of the volunteers. Several also of the minority gave the express instructions of their constituents as their reason for voting for the bill. Towards the close of the debate, Mr. Grattan spoke for a short time, declaring himself decidedly the friend of a parliamentary reform. It has always been, said he, my favorite object, to increase by those means the power of the people. He was glad to investigate that subject, let it come from what quarter it might; it did not come before in a questionable shape; neither did he see any thing to justify an opposition to his favourite scheme. He loved to blend the idea of parliament and volunteers; they had hitherto concurred in establishing their constitution in the last parliament, and he hoped they would do it in the present. He recommended, therefore, an union between parliament and the illustrious body of volunteers, which union it should be the study of his life to preserve. The question having been loudly called for, when the

Speaker

Speaker was rising to put it, Mr. Flood said, "I have very often found, when a question cannot be controverted by fair argument, it is thrown out by a majority calling for the question; but it is impossible for the mind of man to bend to mere matter, or to be satisfied with such conduct. I am asked, is not this bill the order of some other assembly? I never received any order. I have examined with men of all ranks upon this subject, and approve it; but what appearance of hostility or control is there in the present application? Have the volunteers lined the streets, or drawn up before your house? No; they have given their opinion with all humbleness and deference to yours, and beg you will take it up. How could they more prostrate themselves at the feet of parliament? This bill was moved a year ago, when there was no convention fitting; and will you now reject it, because men, who sometimes wear swords, and sometimes wear none, approve it? The volunteers of Ireland are a peculiar body of men, they are citizens as well as soldiers; nor does their skill and discipline, as soldiers, destroy their franchise as citizens."

Mr. Daly confessed he was ashamed, that the gentleman who had made this motion, should not only evade giving an answer to the enquiry, "whether it" "were the result of deliberations in the conventions?" but almost to deny it.

Mr. Flood. I said, they were my own sentiments.

Mr. Daly. I did not say they were not his own sentiments; but they were more notoriously the sentiments of the convention, whatever influence he might have had in forming them; and he said, that he brought them thither by order of that body. He protested, that while an armed assembly was fitting in the capital, their debate was not free. We are told of the great moderation manifested by the delegates, considering how powerfully they are supported; but, (said Mr. Daly,) as I did not oppose, or scorn the volunteers, when weak, as I never went to a county meeting, and with a contumelious aspect, asked if the country were arrayed, and when answered, no, never turned my back upon them; neither will I now, when they are strong and mighty, turn my back to them; but I will meet them as a friend, and will say to them, you are advancing to anarchy and destruction; I beseech you retreat while you may with honour; for there is a turbulent demagogue amongst you, that urges you to your own disgrace.

It has been the misfortune of this country, that parliament has, in too many instances, for a while withstood the wishes of the people, but has yielded in the end; the consequence is, that the people are told by the demagogue, per-
fevere,

severe, and you will at last carry your point. But this is the time to draw a line, and I do rely upon it. I pledge myself for the consequence, that if parliament act with firmness, the people will be content; in a short time they will despise the promoters of faction, and all their boasted menaces will vanish in the air. But if parliament recede one step now, it will fall into a gulph of inevitable destruction.

Upon a division, there appeared

For receiving the bill	-	49
Against it	-	158

Then Mr. Attorney-General moved the following resolutions:

Resolved, That it is now become necessary to declare, that this house will maintain its just rights and privileges against all encroachments whatsoever.

Ayes	-	-	150
Noes	-	-	68

And then Mr. Conolly made the following motion, which was carried unanimously.

Resolved, That an humble address be presented to his majesty, to declare the perfect satisfaction, which we feel in the many blessings we enjoy under his majesty's most auspicious government, and our present happy constitution; and that at this time we find it peculiarly incumbent upon us to express our determined resolution to support the same with our lives and fortunes.

Notwithstanding, Mr. Flood, the great leader of the opposition, immediately after this debate went over to England, several matters were brought before parliament by his adherents.

Mr. Molyneux introduced to the house once more the question of an absentee tax: he complained, that before the business wanted support, many were prominently forward in offering their assistance; now that it was before them, they excused themselves, saying, the time was improper. Thus, after a long debate, the motion was lost by a division of 184 against 22.

On the 9th of December, 1783, Mr. D. Brown prefaced a motion for an address to the crown, with a most distressful picture of the kingdom at that period. He represented those, who lived on the spoils, like wasps, sucking their blood, and smiling at their ruin; he represented the farmer, ruined by the calamitous times, the lower order of people starving, and obliged to sell their provision to satisfy the landlord, who himself could barely get the means of existing from his lands? The avenues to the capital beset with star-
ing

ing manufacturers, and at the very doors of that house, begging of the members to avert, by a small donation, the miseries of impending famine: their necessities made them bold; they even ventured into the Castle yard: their complaints were heard, though but seldom heard before, and proper steps were taken to relieve them; the privy council were summoned, the doors were barred, and the guards of the city were doubled; the garrison ordered to hold themselves in readiness to massacre people already conquered by hunger! Such is the situation of your country. Yet this was the time when you were to keep up an useless and expensive army, and minister to the useless pageantry of a court.

The hour of ripe iniquity had arrived; the hour of retribution would speedily follow. He then moved the following resolutions:

“ That an address be presented to his majesty, humbly to lay themselves
 “ at his majesty’s feet, to assure his majesty of their inviolable attachment to
 “ his majesty’s person and government, and of the grateful sense they felt of
 “ his majesty’s paternal goodness and attention to his subjects of Ireland;
 “ and to declare their readiness and zeal to support, in the most honorable
 “ manner, at all times, the necessary expences of his majesty’s government,
 “ and the dignity of his crown.

“ That they thought it, however, incumbent on his faithful commons, humbly
 “ to lay before his majesty, that for a series of years past, the expences of his
 “ majesty’s government had constantly far exceeded the net produce of the
 “ revenue, whereby the nation had incurred a great and accumulating debt;
 “ and in order to discharge the interest thereof, his majesty’s faithful com-
 “ mons had been under a necessity of diverting a considerable part of those re-
 “ venues, which formerly served towards defraying the current services of his
 “ majesty’s government.

“ That in the year 1773, his majesty’s faithful commons did grant several
 “ new duties, and had since, from time to time, increased them.

“ That they were induced thereto, upon the faith of promises made to his
 “ majesty’s commons, by his majesty’s minister, that the expences of govern-
 “ ment should be retrenched, so that the new grants of the people, and the
 “ promised retrenchment by the minister, should concur in a system of equali-
 “ zation, and put an end to the ruinous practice of running in debt.

“ That his majesty’s faithful commons had fully performed their part of the
 “ engagement; but that their bounty had been so far from being answered on

“ the part of his ministers, that in no period of time had the debt of the nation advanced with so rapid a progress as since that period ; inasmuch, that
 “ his majesty’s commons then found themselves burthened with a debt enormously greater than it was at that period : vastly greater than the nation
 “ was ever before loaded with, and still accumulating ; besides being also
 “ loaded with those new taxes, which were granted for the sole purpose of
 “ putting an end to so ruinous a practice.

“ That his majesty’s present ministers, finding themselves unable to support
 “ the charges of government without increasing the debt of the nation, although aided by all the new taxes, and an increase of produce in the revenues ; and although a very great proportion of the army were not upon
 “ their establishment, did in that session apply for 300,000*l.* to supply the deficiency of the revenues, so that his majesty’s faithful commons could not
 “ even then see any end to the ruinous accumulation of their debt.

“ That such a practice, if suffered to continue, must exhaust the resources,
 “ and check the trade of that country, and must end in the impoverishment
 “ and ruin of the nation, and ultimately disable his majesty’s faithful commons from those exertions, which might become necessary thereafter, and
 “ which they should ever be most willing and desirous to make in support of
 “ his majesty’s government.

“ That they had long confided in the repeated assurances of œconomy
 “ given them from time to time, by his majesty’s ministers ; but at length
 “ finding it in vain any longer to wait for redress from that quarter, they
 “ thought it inconsistent with their duty to his majesty, and those, whom they
 “ represented, any longer to refrain from applying for redress at the foot of
 “ the throne, and imploring his majesty’s protection against his ministers.”

Mr. Parsons seconded the motion. It was violently opposed by the attorney-general. It was, said he, a question, upon which the sense of the house had been already taken three times that session ; it looked extraordinary, to have it introduced at that time, after a committee had been appointed to take into consideration, the only plan practicable, which was a plan for the reduction of the civil establishment ; and after the house had passed a resolution for all practicable retrenchments. He was as much an enemy as any man to the accumulation of debt, session after session ; but the increase of the revenue afforded a prospect of their being soon able to put an end to it, by its reaching
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the amount of their expences. It consequently followed, that an address of that nature was never less necessary than at that time.

Mr. Corry replied to the attorney-general in a most animated speech. After having taken a view of the country from the arrival of the Duke of Portland into it, he lamented that those flattering prospects had proved all delusion, and there was the most decided reason, in reviewing the conduct that had been holden for withdrawing their confidence from the present administration, and agreeing in an address, which contained in itself an undeniable train of facts; and concluded with stating, that they could not confide in the promises of his majesty's ministers, and therefore implored his majesty's assistance against them upon the subject of œconomy; the truth of that must appear, whether the eyes of the nation were turned to their military establishment, to their commercial system, or to their internal œconomy. At a late hour the question was disposed of, by the secretary's moving the order of the day, without a division.

In consequence of the commons having tacked some clauses to the money bills sent up to the lords, the House of Peers, on the 4th of December, 1783, came, to two strong and pointed resolutions, which on the next day they ordered to be added to the standing orders of their house.

*I. “ *Resolved*, by the lords spiritual and temporal in parliament assembled, *nemine dissente*, that all grants for the encouragement of particular manufactures, arts, and inventions, or for the construction or carrying on of any public or other works, ought to be made in separate acts; and that the practice of annexing such grants to bills of aid or supply, for the support of his majesty's government, is unparliamentary, and tends to the destruction of the constitution.

II. “ *Resolved*, by the lords spiritual and temporal in parliament assembled, *nemine dissente*, that this house will reject any bill of aid or supply, to which any clauses or clauses, the matter of which is foreign to, and different from the matter of the said bill of aid or supply; or any clause or clauses for the granting of any sum or sums of money for the encouragement of particular manufactures, arts, or inventions, or for the construction or carrying on of any public or other works, shall be annexed.”

Mr. Curran took up this matter as an insult and injury offered to the dignity

* 5 Lords Journal, p. 409.

and rights of the House of Commons; and gave notice, that on the 16th of that month he should bring it before them; and on that day, there being a very thin house, he entered upon the subject, by observing, that while he reflected, that the motion he was going to make was of the utmost importance to the honour, and even existence of that house; and that he had given full notice of his intention, he was much surprised at the little regard that seemed intended to be paid to it, as was manifested from the emptiness of those benches. It was a question of party; he was of no party; he despised the principle: he never did, nor never would attach himself to party: the question went to assert the privileges of the people of Ireland represented in the House of Commons, and every description of men in that house was equally concerned in supporting it. It was the sole and exclusive right of the commons of Ireland to originate and frame money bills in such manner, as they should think proper, and the resolution he intended to propose, was only to vindicate that privilege from the encroachments of a neighbouring assembly, which had lately, by certain resolutions, invaded that right, that palladium of the constitution, which he trusted every man in the house would think himself bounden to defend.

He was sorry to say, that the constitution of Ireland was so young, that he needed not go back to a very remote period, to prove that the exclusive right of originating and framing money bills had always resided in their house; but for thirty years back, it certainly had, and in England, from whence they derived their constitution, it always had been the practice. The peers and the crown possessed an undoubted right of rejecting such bills *in toto*, but, in the commons alone resided the power of originating or framing them; the very mode of giving the royal assent to such bills, demonstrated that the commons alone was the source from whence they flowed. *His majesty thanks his faithful commons, accepts their benevolence, and wills it to be so*, and this mode obtained both in Britain and Ireland. To whom should the people of Ireland look for the redress of grievances, for the encouragement of arts, for the promotion of commerce, but to their representatives in that house? What powerful engine had that house, by which it could obtain the redress of grievances, the encouragement of arts, for the promotion of commerce, but by including those objects in the bill of supply? And if the right be once given up, or wrested from the commons, they ceased to be the patrons and representatives of the people; another assembly would assume that power, and the people

people would learn to look for that encouragement and support from the aristocratic, which they received from the democratic branch of the state, and that house would become a very cypher, and its members instead of possessing the power of encouraging arts, rewarding merit, or in a word, of serving the country, would become the humble solicitors of another assembly.

From the reign of Henry III. the power of annexing the redress of grievances to money bills, had been the constitutional privilege of the commons of England; the practice of inserting such clauses as the commons deemed proper, had obtained in Ireland for more than thirty years, and to any person acquainted with their constitution, must at the slightest view appear to be their inherent right: he could not therefore suppose that house would be silent, when that privilege was invaded by another assembly; no man entertained an higher opinion of that assembly than he did, and he was persuaded, that so great was their lordships' wisdom, that when that matter should be duly considered by them, they would see the impropriety of the two resolutions, which appeared upon their Journals. It remained for the commons, to vindicate their own privileges by a mild and temperate resolution, which he should propose to the house; for even admitting, that sometimes a House of Commons had erred in making improper grants, they should rather reform themselves, and determine not to err again, than submit to have a monitor over them.

Were he addressing a House of Commons, the most virtuous or the most corrupt, he should expect to be supported in the measure; he would say to a virtuous house, the privilege of originating and framing money bills is the palladium of your liberty, the great engine to restrain oppression, to redress grievances, or to encourage merit. He would say to a corrupt house, it is the palladium of your corruption, the security of the wages of your venality, the means, by which you may obtain the reward of your prostitution. But to the house before which he stood, the arguments of virtue and of honor would be sufficient. He then entered into a personal apology for the discontinuance of his intimacy with Mr. Flood, who if present he had no doubt would support the motion; he spoke very handsomely of Mr. Flood, notwithstanding the late difference on some political opinions. He then moved,

“ That it is the sole and undoubted privilege of the commons of Ireland
“ to originate all bills of supply and grants of public money, in such manner
“ and with such clauses as they shall think proper.”

Mr.

Mr. Parsons seconded the motion, which was only supported by 11 against 58.

Under the late rapid changes in the British cabinet, and the still fluctuating state of the administrations of both countries, it was no wonder, that the Irish House of Commons should not have settled into a regular system of opposition: the subdivisions of that general patriotism, in which Messrs. Flood and Grattan had formerly agreed, had been productive of the only opposition, which then existed: Mr. Flood having long acted in opposition to the Whig or Rockingham party, appeared less disposed to coalesce with them than Mr. Grattan, who had ever adhered to their principles. Mr. Grattan gave them full credit for every measure and every profession: Mr. Flood diffided in their promises, and arraigned their conduct. It appears to have been the system of the Rockingham administration to leave almost unlimited discretion to the Irish government to settle their political ferment in their own way. The generality even of the more thinking people confidently looked up to the new ministry for some efficient steps towards the attainment of *protecting duties, a reduction in the army establishment, œconomy in the civil department, and a reform in the popular representation in parliament. The last of these objects in particular had not unreasonably raised the expectations of the friends of reform to the highest pitch of confidence: they expected that the weight of government would have been thrown into their scale, as the first minister in each country, Mr. Pitt and the Duke of Rutland, had so recently been amongst the most eager and loud in support of that measure in Great Britain.

On the 20th of December, 1782, his majesty's answer to the joint address of both houses, presented on the 1st instant, was communicated to both houses of parliament, and was to the following effect:

“ His majesty returns his hearty thanks to the lords spiritual and temporal, and commons, in parliament assembled, for their dutiful and loyal address. His majesty receives with the highest satisfaction, the sentiments expressed by his parliament respecting his majesty's government; and his majesty's faithful parliament may rest assured of his majesty's determined resolution to concur with them at all times in the maintenance and preservation of

* *i. e.* For protecting their own manufactures, and enforcing the consumption of them at home by laying heavy duties on similar manufactures imported from other countries.

“ that

“ that free and excellent constitution, on which the happiness and interests
 “ of his people of Ireland so essentially depend.”

*The extraordinary movements in the cabinet and the senate of Great
 Britain

* A more important moment to the fate of the British empire certainly never existed than that under our present consideration. For to the changes in the administration of that day are to be attributed the wonderful effects that have distinguished the eventful period of nearly twenty years, which will close the subject of these sheets. The advantages or disadvantages resulting from that extraordinary revolution in the British cabinet will be estimated by every man reflecting on the effects of it by the political bias, interest, or judgment of the individual. Political differences are at all times, and particularly in the present, of too sensitive a quality for the annalist to touch.

(A. R. 69.) On the 8th of December, 1783, Mr. Fox's India Bill had passed the House of Commons on a division of 208 to 202, and the next day was carried up to the House of Lords. Hitherto no symptoms had appeared, at least to the public eye, that indicated the approaching fate both of the bill and its authors. Great pains indeed were taken, and with considerable success, by an almost incredible circulation of pamphlets and political engravings, to inflame the nation against the measures and the persons of administration; and it was also remarked, that in the House of Commons, several of that description of members, well known by the name of king's friends, gave their votes on the side of opposition. But it was generally imagined, that the coalition ministry was then too strong to be shaken by the breath of popular clamour, and wholly improbable, that they should have adopted a measure of such infinite importance, either without knowing, or contrary to the wishes of the king. It went up to the lords on the first reading on the 11th of December. Lord Temple, Lord Thurlow, and the Duke of Richmond, expressed their abhorrence of the measure in the strongest and most unqualified terms. After a short debate, the second reading was fixed for Monday, December 15.

In the mean time various rumours began to circulate, relative to some extraordinary motions in the interior of the court. It was confidently affirmed, that on the 11th of December the king signified to Lord Temple in a closet audience, his disapprobation of the India Bill, and authorised him to declare the same to such persons as he might think fit; that a written note was put into his hands, in which his majesty declared, “ That he should deem those who should vote for it not only “ not his friends, but his enemies; and that if he (Lord Temple) could put this in stronger words, “ he had full authority to do so.” And lastly, that in consequence of this authority, communications had been made to the same purport to several peers in the upper house; and particularly to those whose offices obliged them to attend the king's person.

The circumstances, which happened on the second reading of the bill, confirmed the probability of the truth of these reports. On the division upon a question of adjournment, the ministers were left in a minority of 79 to 87.

The same day the House of Commons, on the motion of Mr. Baker, took into consideration the reports above alluded to. He stated shortly, that the public notoriety, both of the fact itself and of the effects it had produced, called on the house, which was the natural guardian of the constitution, for their immediate interference. He divided the criminality of the subject matter of the report
 into

Britain occasioned a long adjournment in the Irish parliament, in order to give time for the necessary arrangements for the new ministry. But on the

22d

into two parts ; first the giving secret advice to the crown ; and, secondly, the use, that had been made of his majesty's name, for the purpose of influencing the vote of members of parliament in a matter depending before them. The first he contended was a direct and dangerous attack upon the constitution. The law declared, that the king could do no wrong ; and therefore had wisely made his ministers amenable for all the measures of his government. This was of the very essence of the constitution, which could no longer subsist, if persons unknown, and upon whom, consequently no responsibility could attach, were allowed to give secret advice to the crown. With regard to the second, Mr. Baker proved, from the Journals, that to make any reference to the opinion of the king, on a bill depending in either house, had always been judged a high breach of the privileges of parliament ; he therefore concluded with moving, " That it is now necessary to declare, that to report
 " any opinion, or pretended opinion, of his majesty, upon any bill or other proceeding depending
 " in either house of parliament, with a view to influence the votes of the members, is a high crime
 " and misdemeanour, derogatory to the honor of the crown, a breach of the fundamental privileges
 " of parliament, and subversive to the constitution."

The motion was seconded by Lord Maitland, and strongly opposed by Mr. W. Pitt, who urged the impropriety of proceeding on mere unauthenticated rumours ; he concluded his speech with reproaching the ministers for their base attachment to their offices, though, upon their own state of the case, they had lost their power, and no longer possessed the confidence of their prince.

In answer to these observations, it was said to be a strong presumption of the truth of the reports, that though several members, nearly allied to the noble earl, whose name had been mentioned on this occasion, had spoken in the debate, none of them had ventured to assert they were false. After a long and warm debate the house divided, and there appeared for the motion 153, against it 80. It was then resolved, " that on Monday next the house would resolve itself into a committee of the
 " whole house, to take into consideration the present state of the nation."

As a change of ministers appeared to be a measure determined upon by the king, and the dissolution of parliament an immediate and necessary consequence, the majority of the house thought no time was to be lost in endeavouring to render the attempt as difficult as possible. With this view, immediately after the above resolutions were agreed to, Mr. Erskine made the following motion, " That it is
 " necessary to the most essential interests of this kingdom, and peculiarly incumbent on this house,
 " to pursue with unremitting attention the consideration of a suitable remedy for the abuses, which
 " have prevailed in the government of the British dominions in the East Indies ; and that this
 " house will consider as an enemy to his country any person who shall presume to advise his majesty
 " to prevent, or in any manner interrupt the discharge of this important duty."

The motion was opposed, as manifestly factious, and as interfering with the executive part of government, and trenching on the undoubted prerogative of the crown without any justifiable cause. The motion was however carried by the same majority with the former.

On Wednesday the 17th of December the India Bill was rejected by the lords, on a division of 95 to 76. It was remarked, that the Prince of Wales, who was in the minority in the former division,

22d of December,* 1782, the speaker, on presenting the money bills, expressed himself as follows :

“ MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,

“ HISTORY cannot furnish many instances of such remarkable events, as have happened in the course of the last seven years ; of these none are more worthy of observation, than the changes in the human mind, and the more so, because they have been produced by causes, from which they were the least to have been expected. New tenets more consonant to the principles of humanity and justice, have been universally adopted in civil and religious policy ; these are the happy but unexpected fruits of the calamities of war. In other countries national benefits may have compensated for national misfortunes : but it has been the peculiar felicity of this kingdom to acquire the former, without feeling the severi-

vision, having learned in the interim, that the measure was offensive to the king, was absent on this occasion. At twelve o'clock on the following night a messenger delivered to the two secretaries of state his majesty's orders, “ that they should deliver up the seals of their offices, and send them by the under secretaries, Mr. Frazier and Mr. Nepean, as a personal interview on the occasion would be disagreeable to him.” The seals were immediately given by the king to Lord Temple, who sent letters of dismissal the day following to the rest of the cabinet council : at the same time Mr. William Pitt was appointed First Lord of the Treasury, and Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Earl Gower, President of the Council. On the 22d, Lord Temple resigned the seals of his office, and they were delivered to Lord Sydney, as Secretary of State for the home department, and to the Marquis of Carmarthen for the foreign. Lord Thurlow was appointed High Chancellor of Great Britain, the Duke of Rutland Lord Privy Seal, Lord Viscount Howe First Lord of the Admiralty, and the Duke of Richmond Master General of the Ordnance ; Mr. William Grenville and Lord Mulgrave succeeded Mr. Burke in the Pay-Office, and Mr. Henry Dundas was appointed to the office of Treasurer of the Navy.

On the 22d of December Mr. William Grenville begged leave to inform the house, that the noble earl to whom such frequent allusions had been lately made, had authorised him to declare, that he was ready to meet any charge that should be made against him ; and that he had thought fit to resign the seals of his office, in order to avoid the smallest suspicion of seeking for protection or shelter in the power and influence of a minister. In answer to this extraordinary notification, Mr. Fox observed, that, with respect to the propriety of the noble earl's relinquishing an office, which he had held but for three days, he was doubtless himself the fittest judge ; that as to the facts alluded to, facts of public notoriety, and which materially affected the honor of parliament, and the safety of the constitution, he trusted the house would see the necessity of taking them into their most serious consideration : but that the secret nature of those transactions almost precluded the possibility of bringing a personal charge against any one.

* 11 Journ. Com. p. 182.

“ ties of the latter ; to her steady virtue she owes these attainments, and by
 “ her virtue I am confident she will preserve them, and transmit to posterity
 “ unimpaired the British constitution, the very essence of which is liberty and
 “ order. Good government and liberty are inseparable ; they are necessary
 “ to and mutually support each other, and neither can exist without the
 “ other. The commons since the commencement of this session have directed
 “ their attention to these important objects, which were so wisely recom-
 “ mended to them by your excellency, to improve and secure those advan-
 “ tages, which had been acquired in the last parliament ; they have also made
 “ provision, without laying new burthens on the people, for the honorable
 “ support of his majesty’s government, and for the discharge of the arrears
 “ upon the establishments ; and they have the fullest confidence, that your
 “ excellency will represent them to his majesty as loyal, dutiful, and affec-
 “ tionate subjects.”

The revenue still continued to be unequal to the expences, and 300,000*l.*
 were ordered to be borrowed towards supplying the deficiencies ; also 50,000*l.*
 were to be advanced as a loan to the undertakers of the grand canal, upon
 security given ; and 25,000*l.* as a loan to Captain Brooke, to support and
 employ the manufacturers by him established in the cotton line at Prosperous,
 in the county Kildare, upon his giving security for paying the interest half
 yearly into the treasury, and the principal at Lady-Day, 1794. These sums
 were to be raised upon debentures, or treasury bills, aided by one or more
 lotteries, at the discretion of the chief governor.

Immediately upon the change of ministry in England, Lord Northington
 sent in his resignation ; it was accepted on the 7th of January, and yet his
 successor, the Duke of Rutland, was only appointed on the 24th of Febru-
 ary, 1784. The House of Commons had adjourned to the 20th of January,
 on which day they met according to adjournment, and then adjourned to
 the 9th of February, which was the day, to which the House of Lords had
 adjourned from the 22d of December. During this species of inter-regnum,
 one lord lieutenant having resigned, and his successor not having been ap-
 pointed, the House of Commons met on the 9th of February, when the at-
 torney general moved the house to adjourn to the 18th, which was opposed
 by Sir Lucius O’Brien, who saw no reason, why they should adjourn on ac-
 count of the squabble of some gentlemen in England for place, at a time when
 the distressful situation of that country called so urgently upon their atten-
 tion.

tion. Mr. Browne (of the College) opposed the adjournment and said, that all, who respected his majesty should vote against an adjournment proposed by Lord Northington, who was actually in opposition to the king: the adjournment was carried upon a division of 108 against 42. When the house met on the 18th, a long conversation took place upon Mr. John Ponsonby's motion for 3000*l.* to be distributed in the discretion of the lord lieutenant amongst the poor of Dublin. This brought up several members to move for proportionate relief in favour of the distressed poor of their respective boroughs, which were all negatived, except the original motion. In the course of the conversation, Sir Henry Cavendish observed, that money should be granted to set people to work, not to promote idleness: for to such a degree was that now advanced, that there might be seen twenty or thirty sturdy beggars in a knot, and they were grown so outrageous, as to offer force in some measure. He should not be surprized, if in a short time they forced people's doors, and took their property, whether they would or no.* And when the provost expressed a wish, that some general mode of giving bread to the poor could be devised, Sir Edward Newnham suggested a bill for protecting duties, which the right honorable member's talents and influence could effectually secure. Then Ireland would flourish, and they would hear no more of starving manufacturers. Ready money was but a temporary relief; let the great banish foreign fopperies, and be content with home manufactures: protecting duties would be a permanent security against want in the lower order of the people: it behoved them to take those hard-working men under their peculiar protection.

The attorney general informed the house, that he had it in command from his excellency to signify to them his majesty's desire, that they should adjourn till Monday the 23d, and that an official account had arrived of the appointment of the Duke of Rutland to the government of that kingdom. Soon after which, Mr. William Brabazon Ponsonby said, that the lord lieutenant was distinguishable for many virtues, and that he was not ever outdone by any of his predecessors in office, either for integrity, humanity, or public spirit; and as his excellency was shortly to quit the government of the country, he felt it proper to move, though no more than the usual form, that an humble address be presented to the lord lieutenant, to assure his excellency,

* 2 Parl. Deb. p. 358.

that the house learnt with the deepest regret his excellency's determination of relinquishing the government of the kingdom ; to assure him, that the uniform wisdom and virtue of his excellency's administration, manifested by his attention to the encouragement of agriculture, the protection and advantage of their commercial interests, and by his zeal and firmness in support of their happy constitution, intitled him to the most grateful thanks of the representatives of a free people ; that they entreated his excellency to believe, that as they thankfully acknowledged his virtues, they should sincerely regret his no longer continuing to preside over them, and to request that his excellency would be pleased to add one further favor to those already received at his hands, by representing to his majesty their unshaken loyalty to his person and government, their inviolable attachment to their happy constitution, and their determined resolution to support the just rights and privileges of the commons of Ireland against all encroachments whatsoever.

Mr. Conolly seconded the motion, at the same time testifying, that Lord Northington had come over at a critical period, and yet manifested the most steady resolution in supporting the constitution and promoting the real interests of Ireland.

Sir Edward Newnham declared, he could not agree to such an address ; it glanced in very disagreeable terms, on the honor and dignity of the volunteers, who saved their country in defiance of corruption. He could not thank a viceroy, under whose administration a parliamentary reform was (in the language of some members) scouted out of the house : he spoke plain English, and said, a reform of that house, for no house ever wanted it more. He would wait the issue of the present motion, to make one that would do honor to a parliament, of real independent members, which motion he had in his hand, and that was, to thank his majesty for dismissing his late ministry, a part of whom robbed the crown of half its dominions ; and to thank his majesty for appointing a new ministry, in whom the people might confide, and whose principles were declared friendly to the much wanted parliamentary reformation.

Mr. O'Hara, after dwelling pretty much on the services the volunteers had rendered the country, and saying, that instead of the censure indirectly thrown on them by the last paragraph of the address, they deserved the utmost praises, that every friend to Ireland could bestow, moved an amendment, by expunging these words, " we will support the just rights of the commons of
" Ireland

"Ireland against every encroachment whatsoever." These, he said, were insidious words, and seemed directed to the advocates of parliamentary reform.

Mr. Griffith seconded the amendment.

Mr. Grattan observed, that Lord Northington had not been above eight months in that kingdom, and if he had not greatly diminished the national expences, he had done more than most of his predecessors, for he had not at all increased them. The army had been mentioned as an instance of profusion, but would any man lay the blame of a vote of parliament at the door of a lord lieutenant? As to any scheme of systematic reduction, it was impossible, from the shortness of Lord Northington's administration; but they should not forget, that no objection had been made from him, when the expence of collecting the revenue was proposed to be reduced; formerly it was objected to: but with this symptom in his favour, they could not condemn him for not having time to carry a scheme of retrenchment into execution.

As to commercial advantages, he would state a duty on foreign beer, which must operate powerfully in favor of their own breweries and of tillage. When that was announced to the house, he recollected the honorable baronet rising, and laying his hand upon his breast, to return thanks for so great a favour.

Another advantage was the duty laid upon callico, in favour of Irish manufacture. The duty on sugar, that had been conceded that session, was formerly thought an object of the first magnitude in that commerce.

As to constitution, an idea totally new and unsolicited was introduced into their admiralty bill, that is, to cut off any appeal to the British admiralty, by which all that foolish supposition of any power of external legislation for Ireland remaining in Great Britain was for ever done away.

Mr. George Ponsonby approved of the noble and disinterested manner, in which his excellency had refused the additional 4000*l.* a year. But as his excellency did not employ news-papers, their puffers did not blazon it forth with half the assiduity they were known to use on much more trifling occasions. The question being then put, there appeared for the amendment 5, against it 109.

When the house met, according to their last adjournment, on the 26th of February, Mr. Gardiner moved a congratulatory address to the Duke of Rutland, which was unanimously agreed to; and on the 1st of March the
same

same gentleman communicated his Grace's answer to the house. On the same day thirteen several petitions from counties and populous boroughs were presented to the House of Commons by their respective representatives, praying a reform in the state of the representation of the people in parliament.* Amongst other motions on this day, which was properly the first meeting under the Duke of Rutland, Mr. Annesley Stewart moved, that the proper officer should lay before the house the grants of looms and wheels made that year by the trustees of the linen board, and an account of the particular persons, to whom they were ordered to be delivered. When General Cunningham said he was sure there was something rotten at the bottom in the management of that board: he had improved as much as any man in the kingdom, and helped manufactures, by establishing manufactories, and assisting poor manufacturers, yet could never obtain a loom, unless he would accept of it as a particular gift to himself, which he declined doing. The trustees of the linen board did not consider themselves, he said, as trustees, but proprietors, some of whom appropriated thirty looms to themselves.

Mr. Foster wished for the enquiry, as he was convinced nothing would come to light but what would be to the honor of the members of the linen board; and the motion was agreed to unanimously.

The nation now was in the height of a political fever: elated with what they had obtained; soured at their disappointment in being refused what they were taught to believe, was still wanting to complete their freedom; the public attempts both of parliament and government to discredit and dissolve the volunteers; the failure in the attempts of the opposition to procure a reduction of the military establishment at the return of peace, all tended to foment jealousies between the citizen and the soldier. A riot had lately hap-

* 2 Parl. Deb. p. 389. namely, from the county of Armagh by Mr. Brownlow, from the county of Meath by Sir Herc. L. Rowley, from the county of Londonderry by the Hon. Edward Cary, from the freemen and freeholders of the city of Dublin by Mr. Hartley, from the county of Carlow by Sir Richard Butler, from the county of Louth by Mr. Foster, from the county of Dublin by Sir Edward Newnham, from the county of Corke by the provost, from the county of the town of Drogheda by Mr. William Ogle, from the county of Longford by Colonel Gore, from the county of Leitrim by Mr. Peter Latouche, from the county of Sligo by Mr. Owen Wynne, from the county of Sligo from Mr. O'Hara. And on the 5th of the month a similar petition was presented by Mr. Rowley from the county of Antrim, and another from the inhabitants of Belfast. A like petition was presented from the county of Down by Mr. Ward, and a counter petition by Mr. Annesley. A like petition was presented by Mr. Leslie from the county of Monaghan.

pened at Island Bridge, where the outrages of the soldiery had exceeded the rules of military discipline or even common humanity. This exasperated the populace, and in vindictive retaliation, they had recourse to the barbarous practice of houghing the soldiers, whenever they found them straggling and off their guard.

*General Luttrell, (afterwards Lord Carhampton) therefore acquainted the house, that he had a motion to make, for the prevention of a robbery of the worst nature, the robbery of life and limb, by a cruelty practised there in the 18th century, that would have astonished the barbarians of the 14th; it was the inhuman practice of houghing men for no reason but their being soldiers, by the people of the trade and mystery of butchers, whose qualifications were a strong arm, a sharp knife, and a hard heart.

He said, that such acts were sufficient to exasperate men against the civil authority, if the officers of the army had not been watchful to prevent any evil consequences. In the instance of the Island-bridge riot, the civil power vindicated its authority; that immediately after that event, the whole garrison of Dublin had been drawn up on the parade, (he was himself on duty by order of General Baugh) the offended inhabitants were encouraged to appear on the parade, to pitch on such of the soldiers, whose persons they could identify, and the offenders were, in the presence of the high sheriffs, both for city and county, given up to the civil power, and committed to Newgate.

He was the last man in the house, who would get up to excuse the soldiery in that instance, and he mentioned the provocation in mitigation of those proceedings; for he thought a reverence for the laws of civil society, and a peaceable demeanor towards their fellow subjects, was the best part of military discipline.

He quoted the statute of the 5th of Edward VI. whereby persons, who were only suspected of being guilty of offences less horrid than the act of houghing, were liable to have their heads cut off by the parties aggrieved, and the vicinity mulcted into the bargain; but he observed, that the redress was as barbarous as the crime.

That individuals might be urged to retaliation, he asserted, and as a proof, he alluded to a commanding officer of a regiment of dragoons, who declared to them aloud *in terrorem*, that if a man of them were houghed in Dublin, and they did not the next morning bring him a butcher's head, he would flog

* Parl. Debates, p. 419.

them all ; but this was as an additional argument to prove, that the gratitude for protection ought to supersede the idea of revenge.

He then moved, that leave be given to bring in a bill to give better protection to foldiers, and others, against the barbarous practice of houghing. Which was ordered.

On the 13th of March, Mr. Flood, who had lately been over to England, mentioned to the house, that when he last did himself the honour of moving that house for leave to bring in a bill for a more equal representation of the people in parliament, it was the pleasure of the house to negative the proposition by anticipation, and to declare they would not suffer the bill even to be brought in. The subject was sent back to the people, where it had been discussed with excess of application. The approbation it met could be only equalled by the ardor, with which it was adopted. The more examination it underwent, the more it appeared founded in right; and the unanimous and persevering spirit, with which it came back to that house, proved it too firmly riveted in the hearts of the people, to be easily erased by an abrupt and unusual mode of refusal. It contained not his sentiments alone, but the sentiments of the nation, declared both publicly and privately in every capacity. He was therefore anxious to return to that kingdom, that he might be in his place, in order to stand forward in promoting the measure. He admitted, it would be thought by certain gentlemen injurious to their private interest, if the constitution were restored to its original security ; but they must also admit, that it was contrary to every principle of right and justice, that individuals should be permitted to send into that house, two, four, or six members of parliament, to make a traffic of venal boroughs, as if they were household utensils. It seemed a point agreed upon in England, that a parliamentary reform was necessary ; he should mention, he said, the opinion given by Lord Chatham, upon whose posthumous fame the present administration so firmly stood defended by the nation, though that great and illustrious man had been neglected for ten years by the public, and so large a portion of his valuable life suffered to be lost to the community. What were his sentiments on that important matter ? His words most strongly enforced its necessity : in his answer to the address of the city of London, in which he said, that a reform in parliament was absolutely necessary, in order to infuse fresh vigor into the constitution, and that rotten boroughs ought to be stricken off. A decision in England had established that doctrine.

Lord

Lord John Cavendish, the late Chancellor of the Exchequer, supported it; and the borough of Shoreham's measure was intended to be made general.

Much argument had been drawn against the measure from the people's over-awing that house; but he asked gentlemen, if they had not known many benefits to have resulted from the people's interference with their representatives? Let them go back to Lord Carlisle's, and some other administrations before him; was not parliament, in direct opposition to the sentiments of the people; and had not they reason to change their opinions in subsequent administrations, when the sentiments of the people without doors overturned those of people within. They recovered your authority, continued he; do you restore them their privileges. They were a body of men, that ought always to be mentioned with respect in that house, while it continued to enjoy the consequence it had acquired from their exertions. That he would endeavour to give a concise account of what the nation expected. That the people should have a real, and not a nominal representation. That the unjust privileges of boroughs should be abolished. That the election of their representatives should be in the body of the people. And that corruption should be checked in the elected as well as the elector.

It was to be expected, from the natural impetuosity of the Irish, that the volunteers should violently engage in every pursuit, that tended to keep up their consequence, and extend the cause of liberty, which they had long identified with the necessity of arming. The generality of them unquestionably were sanguine for a reform of parliament. They were spirited up by Mr. Flood, and his friends, loudly and strongly to urge their claims of reform: and were on the other hand buoyed up with the conviction, that parliament dared not to refuse or resist them. The great contest, was on the second reading of Mr. Flood's bill on the 20th of March, 1784. Mr. Monk Mason began the debate, and in a set and able speech, drew together all the general and particular objections at any time made against attempts at reforming the popular representation in parliament.*

Sir Boyle Roche said, the design of the bill was to transfer the franchise of election from the few to the many; or, in other words, to deprive the present possessors of the patronage of boroughs, and give it to another set of men:

* In order that the reader may have before his eyes at one view the grounds of opposing this attempt at reform, Mr. Mason's speech is given at full length in the Appendix, No. LXXI.

while they were endeavouring to gratify one set of men, they should not act as tyrants to another. This bill would be a proscriptive act against the Roman Catholics, who would be all turned out of their farms to make room for forty shilling freeholders. The Roman Catholics were a brave and loyal people; their loyalty had been proved in the fire of adversity; they required only that portion of liberty, which the legislature should deem consistent with the happiness of their fellow subjects. But if the constitution were to be broken up, and a new one to be formed, they had as much right to an equality of representation as any other set of men. He would, therefore, make an amendment, "That protestants be expunged from the bill, and the words persons of any religious denomination, inserted in their stead."

The Speaker informed them, that the amendment, till the question before the house, "whether the bill should be committed," was decided, was premature.

This objection to the bill was also urged by Major (now General) Doyle, who said, "But, sir, the greatest objection to this, is the grievous oppression, that will be thrown upon three-fourths of as loyal subjects as his majesty can boast of, I mean the Roman Catholics of Ireland; an enlightened parliament had done away the illiberal prejudices of former ages; and should they, in the very act of renovation, re-rivet those chains, from which that parliament freed them? That would operate cruelly against the Roman Catholic tenant; for no sooner would his lease expire, than he, his wife, and helpless children, would be set adrift to make way for the Protestant freeholders, to augment the influence of the petty bashaw of the barony: the proposed extension of the right of suffrage, excluding the Roman Catholic, was adding insult to injury; they brought the cup of liberty to his parched lips, but, like Tantalus, precluded him from the taste."

Mr. Grattan so far differed in his patriotic efforts to serve his country from Mr. Flood, that until they had procured a constitution, he was indefatigable and foremost in every exertion, that could tend to promote the cause of civil freedom: he had laboured incessantly till the year 1782; and when Great Britain had, with superior wisdom and liberality, called upon Ireland to state her own terms, and had most magnanimously granted them without stint or cavil, for a time he appeared to rest upon his oars: he never receded from the principles he avowed: though his enemies objected to him, that the relaxation of his fervor was an effect of the donation of 50,000*l*. There never was any personal cordiality between Mr. Grattan and Mr. Flood; the purity of Mr.

Flood's

Flood's patriotism appears to have been much questioned, from the recency of its birth, the doubtfulness of its parentage, and his intemperance in the indulgence of the novelty. On this important debate, Mr. Grattan was the only member of the house who did not exceed his usual powers. He temperately observed, that the question before the house was, whether the bill should be committed? And that question should be decided by the principle of the bill, and not by any defect in its clauses. He believed that bill never would be carried into effect; but a bill might be formed by correcting all its defects, still preserving its principles. The committee was the place to make alteration or improvement.

That the bill was an innovation on the constitution, he denied; the fundamental principles of the constitution were abused by the corruption of boroughs, and if they were so, reformation had become necessary. That bill went to first principles; it was an innovation upon abuse; but a renovation of the constitution. What was the octennial bill; what were the election laws, but innovations upon abuses, and renovations of first principles? Their forefathers were not so apprehensive of innovation: the great charter was an innovation upon tyranny: the bill of rights was also such an innovation; but they were both restorations of the people's rights.

It was said, that the bill would increase both the oligarchical and democratical factions of the state; that was impossible; the power of the commons and of the people, were the same; and he was a bad man, who would wish to separate them. It was not three hundred gentlemen sitting in parliament, that were the commons of Ireland, but those gentlemen and their constituents together: it was that alliance, that gave strength and longevity to the constitution, which long ago would have fallen under tyranny, if not supported by the people; that was the cause why the constitution of England had not fallen, as that of France had done, for want of such an invigorating principle.

Another argument was, "that we ought not to disfranchise those persons, who "at present enjoy the right of voting in boroughs;" but could that be called a franchise, which was used as a private property, either to be sold or given away? Besides, they imposed no hardships on those people, but what the law had already imposed; for the law of the land disallowed the selling seats in parliament.

He had declared his approbation of the principle of the bill, and would vote to have it committed; so far would he go, and no farther: he would not

commit the parliament, nor give their consent to any act or resolution, or expression injurious to the commons, because that would be to discredit their authority, and impeach the law-makers; and what had they been contending for, but the supremacy of their parliament? He acknowledged their constitution had some defects, but such as it was, it was the best existing; and though it might be a proper subject for reform, it ought not to be the subject of calumny. Mr. Pitt had set a proper example: animated with his father's patriotic spirit, he wished to invigorate the constitution of his country, to supply it with strength, and remedy its infirmities; but he felt a dutiful respect, which restrained him from any violent or rash proceeding. He knew, that if by any excess of the reformer, a reform were once lost, every hope must perish with it.

Gentlemen had intimated, that discontents might prevail among the volunteers and the people, if that measure should be rejected; he doubted not there might be some little ebullition; but nothing less than a miracle could convince him, that they would ever violate the public peace and good order; they were restrained by the constitution they possessed, and by the fame, which they had acquired. When he declared that opinion of the volunteers, he knew he spoke before men, who in conjunction with them, had done more than the barons at Runnymede, or the convention parliament: men who had acquired more by wisdom and discretion, than others with the sword. He did not like the distinction, which said, the people, and not parliament, acquired the great objects, for which that country lately contended: the distinction was not just or true; they were acquired by an happy concurrence and union of both.

Who acquired the free trade? The House of Commons.

Who acquired the repeal of the 6th of George the 1st? The House of Commons.

Who restored the appellant jurisdiction? The House of Commons.

Who framed an Irish mutiny bill? The House of Commons.

In a word, who obtained all, that could be demanded or desired? The House of Commons, backed, not bullied, by the volunteers; supported, but not intimidated. The volunteers never did, nor never would attempt to overawe that parliament, under which they formed: that parliament, which they had pledged their lives and fortunes to support.

As the principle of the bill went to a reform, he would vote for having it go into a committee; the defective clauses might there be altered, as was done
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in the case of the bill for relieving their Catholic fellow-subjects, which he had the happiness to support. The right honorable gentleman who introduced that bill, being convinced of its imperfection, consented to a total alteration of its form, retaining its principle and spirit; the same thing might be done with this bill; and he sincerely wished it the same effect.

About four o'clock on Sunday morning, the question, whether the bill should be committed, was put, and on a division, the numbers were—

Ayes	-	-	85
Noes	-	-	159

Thus, for the present, was put an end to the grand question of reform in parliament. The majority of 74 was too decisive not to deter the partizans of reform from attempting any thing further upon the subject. Two other objects of great national importance were brought before parliament that session; the regulation of the revenue, by Mr. Grattan, and the improvement of commerce, by Mr. Gardiner: the first on the 31st of March,* the last on the 2d of April.†

The backwardness of the parliament in seconding the wishes of several of the armed associations, and their assumption of a right to give instructions to, and watch the motions of their constituents in parliament, had so sharpened the rancour and animosity of the people, that they flew out into the most audacious outrages. On the 5th of April, a complaint was made to the house of a breach of privilege, by several persons riotously breaking into the house; two of the persons guilty of the offence, having been seized by the serjeant at arms, were ordered to be prosecuted, and immediately Mr. Foster moved a committee to enquire into the conduct of the magistrates of the city of Dublin, respecting an outrageous mob, which had broken into the house that day, and behaved riotously and abusively to several of the members, in which it was unanimously resolved, that an address should be presented to the lord-lieutenant, that he would be pleased to issue a proclamation, offering such reward as he should think proper, for the discovery of such persons, as had been concerned in tumultuously breaking into the house, or who had incited or encouraged others thereto; and on the same day a complaint was made of several

* The speeches of Mr. Grattan and of Mr. Beresford, lay open the whole system of revenue in Ireland at that time, and are to be seen in the Appendix, No. LXXII.

† Mr. Gardiner's speech is given in the Appendix, No. LXXIII. as a most valuable piece of historical information on the commerce of Ireland.

paragraphs in a printed newspaper, intituled "*The Volunteer's Journal, or Irish Herald*," published that morning; which being read, it was unanimously resolved, that the said paper was a daring, false, scandalous, and seditious libel on the proceedings of that house, tending to promote discontents among his majesty's subjects, to create groundless jealousies between that kingdom and Great Britain, to alienate the affections of the people from his majesty's government, and to excite an opposition to the laws of the land; and it was ordered, that the printer and publisher of the paper should forthwith attend the house.

On the same day Mr. Foster moved, that the printer and publisher of *The Evening Chronicle*, should also be brought to the bar of the house, the same seditious and libellous paragraphs having also appeared in that paper: and almost immediately after, he reported from the committee appointed to enquire into the conduct of the magistrates on that occasion. The house came to the following resolutions, viz.

"*Resolved*, That it appears to this committee, that the Right Hon. Thomas Green, the lord mayor, received notice on Monday last, at nine o'clock, from Mr. Secretary Orde, that he had information of an intended tumult in the city on that day; and that the lord mayor had seen, on Sunday evening last, one of the seditious hand-bills, which were dispersed throughout the city on that day.

"*Resolved*, That it appears to this committee, that notwithstanding such information, the said lord mayor did not take any step to prevent the tumultuous rising of the people, which happened in this city on Monday last.

"*Resolved*, That it appears to this committee, that the said lord mayor has not acted with that caution and prudence which becomes the magistrate of this city."

Mr. Griffith said, he thought the lord mayor had acted with a becoming regard for the principles of the constitution. He had refrained from calling on a military force, which the constitution abhors, until compelled by the last extremity. In doing this, he was warranted by the prudent and constitutional advice of Mr. Speaker.

The Prime Serjeant said, that the lord mayor had entered upon his office at a time, when the city was in the most perfect state of tranquillity, and when its police was much more completely regulated, than ever it had been at any former period. In that state, his predecessor's great ability and unwearied application

application to the duties of his high office, had left the city; but hardly had Mr. Green entered upon his year of mayoralty, when he, who had been an active officer in the county of Wicklow, suffered every thing to run into disorder; the streets became impassable, riots became frequent, and every duty neglected. The man who could so far forget himself, as not to prevent such tumults as had arisen, he said, must be considered as little better than an accomplice, and therefore, though with infinite reluctance he should consent to any thing disgraceful to a magistrate, he thought Mr. Greene ought to be censured.

The Recorder and Alderman Warren supported the lord mayor, as did Mr. Hartley.

Mr. Hayes, of the County of Wicklow, said, that he had for many years known the lord mayor in that county, where he was esteemed a worthy public spirited man, and an active upright magistrate.

Upon a division there appeared, for censuring the lord mayor 35, and 17 against it.

Among other matters then pending, Sir John Blaquiere's paving bill had created discontent amongst a large part of the citizens of Dublin, and many of them had petitioned against it.* On the 7th of the month, Mr. Alderman Warren said, that such was the tenor of that bill, as induced the inhabitants to think it inexpedient, agreeable to the petitions presented on the preceding day; that to prevent the grievances arising therefrom, counsel ought to be heard, who were ready to attend at the bar.

Sir Boyle Roche dissented, not only in approving of the principles of the bill, but also thought it repugnant to the dignity of that house, to pay attention to the solicitations of an unruly people. He wanted to know if it were not an insult to the house, to have petitions offered up by ringleaders of mobs. He then entered into a detail of his being surrounded by a riotous mob near the Tholsel, and challenged by them to know, if he were not an abettor of Sir John Blaquiere's bill; but as a guiltless man, that could never be intimidated, he declared he was; in consequence of which, he found himself ingulphed in a vortex, whence he could not extricate himself; and on demanding who they were, he received for answer, that they were the aggre-

* 3 Parl. Debates. Although the petition were presented, yet was it not accepted by the house, which rejection irritated the populace very much: even the presentation of it is not noticed in the Journals.

gate body. Thus he perceived, that if Napper Tandy thought proper to go into the remotest recesses of that city, and excite the inhabitants to acts of desperation, these meetings were to be legalized by the specious appellation of *aggregate bodies*.

The Recorder, in the strongest terms, reprobated the whole bill, as a system of unexampled tyranny and oppression. It placed, he said, in the hands of a set of low persons, (for commissioners acting for 150*l.* a year could be no other) a power to fine and torment with all the insolence of authority, every citizen of Dublin. It gave them power to raise taxes, and to borrow money; to summon whomsoever they thought proper before their tribunal; and upon neglect or disobedience, to impose a fine of 40*l.* By this inquisitorial act, the father would be compelled to give evidence against his son, and the son against his father before that honorable board.

The principle of the bill, he said, was utterly repugnant to the law and constitution; and although the mover of the bill expressed his readiness to admit of any reasonable amendment to it, that could be suggested, he objected to the whole principle, as utterly incapable of being modelled to the public benefit.

In this licentious disposition of the public mind, Mr. Foster had been particularly marked as an object of obloquy* in the newspapers: he therefore brought in a bill for restraining the liberty of the press, which was the only remaining subject of importance, that was agitated in parliament during the session. It was then opposed by some of the opposition.

On the 2d reading of the bill, Sir Edward Crofton said, he was astonished

* This appears to have been the case from what Mr. Gardiner remarked in the debate. "The continuation of abuse, which is thrown upon one of the most virtuous characters in this house; a man, to whom the trade and agriculture of Ireland is more indebted, than to any other person living, demonstrates the necessity of the bill. No man can serve this country as things are now conducted, without becoming at one time or other the object of calumny. I have experienced this myself, though now I happen to be a favorite, possibly with as little reason, as my right honorable friend is the mark for obloquy.

"The licentiousness of the press is so great, that no man can rest one hour secure, that his character will not become the prey of some hireling defamer. A bill, therefore, to secure character from malignant attacks, is absolutely necessary. Nothing can be more moderate than the principle of that which is now before us. It allows every man to publish whatever he thinks proper, only making him responsible for what he does publish. This is simply the principle of the bill; if there be any defect in its clauses, that may be remedied by going into a committee." 3 Parl. Debates, p. 162.

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that a bill of such a dangerous tendency to the constitution, and so violent an attack on the liberty of the subject, should be agitated in such thin houses. He considered the press as the strongest bulwark of the constitution; and as he valued that constitution, would resist any measure of a tendency to lessen its securities. He then moved, that the second reading be postponed to the 1st of August.

Mr. Foster said, that it was highly unjust to suppose any injury intended to the liberty of the press by the bill in question; the manifest design of that bill was to preserve the liberty of the press, by curbing its licentiousness, which of late had grown to such a degree of enormity, as to become a national reproach. The bill was not intended as a restraint upon any man, to prevent his publishing his sentiments or opinions. If the bill should pass, every man would hereafter be at full liberty to publish whatever he should think proper, with this difference only, that if a jury of his countrymen should deem such publication a false, scandalous, or malicious libel, he would be answerable. After a very warm debate, the house divided, 22 for the adjournment, and 77 against it. On a subsequent day Mr. Brownlow supported the bill; and Mr. Grattan said, the necessity of the first clause of the bill, that for making known the real name of the printer or proprietor of every newspaper, was apparent, and if carried with unanimity, would produce the most salutary consequence. There was one paper, said he, that teemed with exhortations and incitements to assassination, which daily published such atrocious matter, as would not be suffered in any other country existing. Parliament was called upon to check such proceedings, and to guard the liberty of the press from the injury it might receive, through the scandalous and licentious conduct of the newspapers. He had no idea of wounding the liberty of the press; but if it were suffered to go on in the way it then did, one of two things would ensue; it would either excite the unthinking to acts of desperation, or it would itself fall into utter contempt, after having disgraced the nation. To prevent either of which consequences, he thought parliament called upon to interfere consonant to the spirit of the constitution, not by imposing any new penalty, nor by compelling printers to have their publications licensed, but merely to oblige them to put their names to their newspapers.

The House of Commons had ordered their Serjeant at Arms to take the publishers and printers of the offensive newspapers out of the custody of the civil power, and commit them over to military escorts, under which they were more cruelly and severely treated, than they could have been by the civil

power. Against these illegal stretches of power, some of the warmest patriots vehemently exclaimed. Although the bulk of the house were against them, the agitation of the question upon the unwarrantable exercise of a rigor so manifestly beyond the law, produced in that ferment* of the public mind the very worst of consequences.

* General Luttrell, who was at no time a popular favorite, may by some be suspected of having exaggerated the truth, when on the 12th of April, he said in the house, no country was ever disgraced in the manner Ireland had lately been ; nothing less than essays in praise of murder, investigating the different means, by which it might be perpetrated, and giving preference to the poignard as the most certain and least dangerous to the assassin. There was no place in the world where excitements to murder would be permitted ; and if the mobs there committed murders, they must be attributed to the news-printers, who, not content with assassinating characters, had proceeded to the shedding of blood. The bill before them, would, he hoped, remedy that enormity, and also another, which they had lately imported from London, that is, the raising contributions by defaming, or threatening to defame innocent persons. He hoped a newspaper would no longer be able to say, give me so much money, or your character shall be destroyed by calumny. This is like the means used to raise contributions by a set of infamous miscreants in England, against whose practices the legislature of that country was compelled to exert itself ; they used to threaten persons, that if not paid for silence, they would accuse them of crimes, which to mention, shocks our nature : how much better, he asked, have been the practices of some news-printers here ?

Mr. Gardiner, however, who was at that time the prime favorite of the people, as he was the avowed advocate of the distressed manufacturers, thus confirmed the General's statement : —“ I have been in some degree, the innocent cause of the disturbances that have prevailed of late ; but I trust the house will do me the justice to recollect, that I did declare in November last, upon the very first appearance of them, that if the people would not desist from all violence, and demean themselves in a peaceable manner, I would abandon the cause, which I had undertaken. And could I have foreseen the tumults that have happened, I certainly would have been as good as my word ; nor will I in future ever undertake the smallest thing for the relief of the manufacturers, if the people continue to act so improperly as of late they have done ; and I hope the gentlemen who divided with me upon the question of protecting duties, will make the same determination.

“ As to the bill now before us, the first clause is on all hands admitted ; and the necessity of the last, (by which the hawkers of any unstamped, inflammatory, or libellous paper, may be compelled to prove from whom he received it,) is obvious. It was by the inflammatory hand-bill lately dispersed, that all this tumult has been excited, as I am well assured by the working people themselves, who declared, that they had no idea of stirring till they saw it.

“ I must say once more, that had I foreseen what was to happen, I never would have undertaken the cause of the manufacturers ; and I feel myself extremely hurt at the improper conduct of the working people : I lament it on their own account, because parliament never will be driven into measures ; and though otherwise what I promised might be taken up and carried into effect, perhaps in a less degree, yet while riot and disturbance continue, nothing can be done.”

Towards

Towards the close of the session Lord Hilwarlin's motion in the House of Commons for a special address to the lord lieutenant, declaratory of their approbation of his Grace's just and wise administration, produced some very angry debates for several days. The treasury bench resounded with the highest eulogies of the peculiar and signal advantages of the Duke of Rutland's administration. His most impressive panegyrist was Mr. Foster, who in answer to the three chief arguments from the opposition benches, namely, that the people was discontented, that the session had been disgraceful, and that the House of Commons was unpopular, thus expressed himself. "They say, the people have cause to be discontented. I deny it, unless they mean that cause, which no human power could prevent, the inclemency of the late season. The utmost efforts indeed have been made to alleviate it, by the corn bill and other measures: I know the news-papers have taken pains to inflame the public mind, and to irritate the passions of the people, by false and seditious writings; and those, who credit the falsehoods of news-papers may be discontented, but I will not believe, that there are many such; the more reasonable and discerning persons cannot be misled, they must see, that their representatives have been watchful of their interests, and that that session of parliament had been distinguished by many wise and beneficial acts. They say, that it has been a disgraceful session. He had sat many sessions, and he never knew one wherein so many good acts had been passed, or more public benefits procured. They said, that house was unpopular: unpopular it might be with the promoters of discontent and sedition, but it was popular with the wise and discerning: it would be a fatal day to Ireland, when the people should quarrel with their parliament. The privileges of that house were the privileges of the people: its strength was their's, and if they failed to support its strength and its privileges they were undone."

The cry on the other hand from the opposition benches was for what bounties received from the Duke of Rutland were the people of Ireland to offer up their thanksgiving? Was it for the rejection of their favourite bill to reform the representation in that house, and to renovate the constitution? Was it for the precipitate dismissal of the equalization bill, without deigning it any offer of redress, any slight promise from the minister, to soothe the disappointed? Was it for that lenient and equitable act the post-office bill, the adoption of which from a former administration only aggravated the injury?

Was it for the contemptuous rejection of every resolution proposed there, to enforce the residence of certain absentee great officers of the state, who drew immense salaries from that kingdom, and squandered them in another, inattentive to, and negligent of the duties annexed to these offices? Was it for filling the streets of the capital of that free country with an armed host, not amenable to the control, and derogatory to the privileges of its peaceful citizens? Or was it for the transforming the House of Commons into a court of star chamber, and converting the Castle from an Irish court to a French bastille, or a Grenada inquisition? The thanks the people owed for such benevolences were in fact rendered by the torrent of disapprobation and discontent out of doors, which rolled from shore to shore of that kingdom, loudly proclaiming their disapprobation of the administration of his Grace of Rutland *in toto*.

The original address, which was highly flattering to the lord lieutenant, was carried by a very decided majority.* Afterwards Mr. Griffith moved an address

* The following was the address presented to the lord lieutenant (11 Journ. Com. p. 282.)

To his Grace Charles Duke of Rutland, Lord Lieutenant General and General Governor of Ireland.

The humble address of the Knights, Citizens, and Burgesses in parliament assembled,

“ MAY IT PLEASE YOUR GRACE,

“ WE his majesty’s most dutiful and loyal subjects, the commons of Ireland, in parliament assembled, see with particular satisfaction the arrival of that period, which calls upon us
“ to review the various measures of our session, and to testify to your Grace thereupon the warm
“ sense of our obligation and duty.

“ We have at once to congratulate ourselves, and to acknowledge the goodness of our sovereign,
“ in the appointment of a chief governor, who by attention to regulate his conduct by our wishes,
“ hath fully confirmed the justice of that early confidence, which we zealously professed in the liber-
“ rality of his disposition, and the spirit of his hereditary virtues; a just estimation of such qualities
“ must ever render him the favourite of a spirited and generous nation.

“ We are persuaded, that his majesty hath observed with pleasure our attention to those objects,
“ which were recommended to our deliberation at the opening of the session, and has graciously
“ accepted the assurance of satisfaction, which we have repeatedly expressed in the blessings of our
“ happy constitution.

“ And when we reflect upon the measures we have taken to ensure a constant supply of corn
“ under every possible circumstance; upon the prospect of benefit in the management of the re-
“ venue; upon our attention to make the additional security of private property a cause of increase
“ to the national credit; upon our provision for the improvement of the metropolis; and our en-
“ couragement of useful establishments, and of various branches of trade and manufacture, we

“ doubt

address to his majesty, which spoke more dubiously of the lord lieutenant's exertions to second the calls of the country for the improvement of manufactures and other commercial advantages, which was so moderate and so transcendently true, that Mr. Foster, fearing to permit it to go to a vote, artfully compromised the matter, and brought over Mr. Griffith to the treasury bench, where with the alteration of some few words, which Mr. Griffith did not consider very material, such an address was settled as should meet with no opposition. Mr. Griffith in concluding a very warm and impressive speech, before he moved his original address, added these emphatical words. He hoped, "that no man would be bold enough to move the previous question upon it, the previous question, that political bowstring, with which the mutes of the Castle strangle every honest subject, which they dare not openly arraign." The address amended and settled by Mr. Foster, which was voted unanimously, was, "That his faithful commons humbly begged leave to approach his majesty's throne with hearts full of gratitude for the many blessings they enjoyed under his wise and benignant government; and at the same time to express to his majesty the deep concern they felt for those distresses, which affected many of the lower ranks of manufac-

"doubt not of receiving the true reward of our services, in the approbation of our sovereign, and in the gratitude of our fellow subjects.

"We reflect with true pride and satisfaction upon the solid advantages, which have been obtained for this country within a very short period. We are aware of the situation of the empire, and the peculiar circumstances, which have prevented the adjustment of some points, which concern our trade and manufactures, and we rely upon the readiness of your Grace's liberal and benevolent assistance for the furtherance of such practical measures as deliberate wisdom and generous policy may adapt to our real necessities and general interests.

"As guardians of the rights and safety of our fellow subjects, as well as assertors of the national honour, we have felt ourselves called upon to express our abhorrence of tumult and of seditious publications; zealous to uphold the true spirit of the constitution, we have made it the object of our unanimous resolution to defend its genuine liberty against the attacks of licentiousness.

"We have not suffered to escape our grateful observation the early anxiety, which your Grace manifested to remove every apprehension of party prejudices or partial charges in the councils or measures of government. We feel and acknowledge the benefits arising from such a principle; we have studied to shew a sincere disposition to confirm them, by a liberal imitation; and we shall be zealous to concur in diffusing throughout every part of the kingdom the successful influence of so happy an example. Convinced as we are of the importance to this kingdom of a steady and permanent administration, it is our ardent wish, that his majesty may long continue your Grace in the government of Ireland."

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“ turers in that kingdom. That his faithful commons begged leave humbly
 “ to represent to his majesty, that his majesty’s subjects in Ireland had always
 “ been a loyal people, and had, on every occasion, manifested the warmest
 “ attachment to his majesty’s royal person and family. That as they were
 “ deeply impressed with his majesty’s paternal care and affection, they enter-
 “ tained the warmest hopes that the interval between the close of the present
 “ session and the beginning of the next would afford sufficient opportunity
 “ for forming a wise and well digested plan for liberal arrangement of com-
 “ mercial intercourse between Great Britain and Ireland to be then brought
 “ forward. That his faithful commons humbly begged leave to assure his
 “ majesty, that such a plan, formed upon the broad basis of reciprocal ad-
 “ vantages, would be the most effectual means of strengthening the empire
 “ at large, and cherishing the common interest and brotherly affection of
 “ both kingdoms.”

The parliament was prorogued on the 14th of May, 1784, and the lord
 lieutenant concluded the session with a *speech appropriate to the important
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*“ MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

“ IN addressing you for the first time in parliament, at the close of the session,
 “ I embrace with pleasure the occasion, which is afforded me of returning you my affectionate ac-
 “ knowledgment for the cordiality of my reception, and the early assurances of your confidence.
 “ And I am at the same time highly gratified in being authorised to communicate to you the sen-
 “ timents of perfect satisfaction with which his majesty approves of your exertions for the public
 “ welfare.

“ GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS,

“ I am happy in obeying his majesty’s commands, to thank you for the cheerfulness with which
 “ you have made provision for the exigencies and honour of his government. Let me assure you,
 “ on my part, that the readiness with which you have granted supplies stimulates my utmost atten-
 “ tion and care, that they shall be managed with œconomy, and applied with prudence.

“ MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

“ You will have much satisfaction in reflecting, that the various objects which, in consequence
 “ of the acknowledged independence of the legislature, were recommended for your deliberations,
 “ at the opening of this session, have been diligently pursued and accomplished.

“ You have wisely given your sanction to the extraordinary expedients, which it has been neces-
 “ sary to employ in order to preserve the kingdom from famine; and I feel great satisfaction in the
 “ prospect, that they will be prevented for the future, by the new and judicious arrangement of your
 “ corn laws, and the improved extension of your agriculture.

“ I see with pleasure the exertions of an humane and liberal principle, which has prompted you
 “ to give encouragement to the national industry, by favourable regulations and well directed boun-

“ ties.

and critical situation of the kingdom. That was the first time the Duke of Rutland had personally addressed the parliament. The difficulties of the session were greater from without, than from within the walls of the senate. It appears from the efforts of some of the members upon the armed associations when the session was over, that attempts were made to carry the questions lost in parliament by a majority out of it. After the prorogation the discontent and violence of the people rather increased than diminished. The populace frequently assembled, and committed unjustifiable outrages; they attacked the houses and persons of shopkeepers, who were suspected of not favoring the non-importation agreement, and in some instances they proceeded after the American fashion to the desperate measure of "tarring and feathering." Some of the most daring received punishment; and the mob once proceeded to such extremities, that one of the high sheriffs, Mr. Kirkpatrick, in endeavouring to suppress them, received a severe wound in the head, and

"ties. I have warmly at heart the advancement of your trade, and the success of all your manufactures, and I shall not fail either to consider, or to represent those instances whereof the peculiar circumstances of the empire have hitherto prevented a full investigation, and which shall be found to require a further adjustment.

"The useful regulations proposed to be introduced into the collection and management of the revenue; the security of private property, and extension of national credit, by depositing in the bank of Ireland, the money of suitors in the courts of chancery and exchequer; the plans for improving the metropolis, calculated not more for ornament and splendour, than for health and convenience; your unanimous determination to defend the freedom of the constitution against the attacks of licentiousness; and your attention to the support of charitable institutions, are all unequivocal testimonies of your wisdom, humanity, and justice.

"I have not failed to convey to our sovereign the satisfaction you have so decidedly expressed in the blessings of that happy constitution, which you enjoy under his majesty's auspicious government. Sensible as you are of those eminent advantages, it can hardly be necessary for me to desire, that you should be attentive to impress them on the minds of others, over whom your superiority of rank and information must and ought to give you a just and benevolent influence.

"I have a sure confidence, that during your residence in your respective counties, you will seek to direct and encourage the industry of your neighbourhood, in the pursuits best adapted to their situations, and by which the community at large may be most effectually benefited. You will point out to them the real resources of a free and fertile country, under the blessings of peace, and the mild protection of the laws; and you will not suffer misapprehensions to perplex, or false informations to misguide them.

"It is my happiness and pride to reflect, that our united attention has been, and is directed to the same objects, of maintaining and advancing the rights, the dignity, and the prosperity of Ireland, and the general interests of the empire."

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matters would have proceeded to more serious consequences, had not a party of the military, headed by another magistrate, fortunately come to the sheriff's assistance.

As the principal objection to the introduction of Mr. Flood's bill for a parliamentary reform was, that it originated with an armed body, it was now thought expedient to attempt the measure in some way less exceptionable. The sheriffs and chief magistrates were therefore called upon to convene the inhabitants of their respective counties, fully to discuss that measure; and such a meeting having been convened at Dublin on the 7th of June, 1784, at which the high sheriffs presided, the following resolutions were agreed to, viz.

Resolved unanimously, That the present imperfect representation, and the long duration of parliaments, are unconstitutional, and intolerable grievances.

Resolved unanimously, That the voice of the commons of Ireland is no less necessary for every legislative purpose, than that of either the sovereign or the lords; and therefore the people claim it as their just, inherent, and unalienable privilege, to correct abuses in the representation, whenever such abuses shall have so increased as to deprive them of their constitutional share in their own government.

Resolved unanimously, That the people of Ireland have, and always had a clear, unalienable, and indefeasible right to a frequency of elections, as well as to an adequate and equal representation, founded upon stronger grounds than that of any act or acts of parliament; and that the attainment of those constitutional important objects, is the most effectual expedient for restoring and securing the independence of parliament.

Resolved unanimously, That the present inadequate representation, and the long duration of parliaments, destroy that balance, which by our constitution should subsist between the three estates of the legislature, render the members of the House of Commons independent of the people, procure determined majorities in favour of every administration, and threaten either an absolute monarchy, or that still more odious government, a tyrannical aristocracy.

Resolved unanimously, That the majority of the House of Commons is not chosen by the people, but returned by the mandates of peers of the realm and others, either for indigent boroughs, where scarce any inhabitants

“ tants reside, or for considerable cities and towns, where the elective power
“ is vested in a few.

“ *Resolved* unanimously, That the venality and corruption of the present
“ House of Commons, evinced by the many arbitrary acts passed in the last
“ session, and the contempt and indignity, with which they treated the appli-
“ cations and petitions of the constituent body, oblige us now to request
“ the people at large to unite with us in the attainment of a more adequate
“ representation, and in petitions to the throne for a dissolution of the pre-
“ sent parliament.

“ *Resolved* unanimously, That the strength of a nation consists in the union
“ of its inhabitants.

“ *Resolved* (with one dissenting voice), That a participation in general
“ rights must for ever engage mankind to operate most effectually for each
“ other.

“ *Resolved* therefore (with one dissenting voice), That to extend the rights
“ of suffrage to our Roman Catholic brethren, still preserving in its fullest
“ extent the present Protestant government of this country, would be a
“ measure fraught with the happiest consequences, and would be highly con-
“ ducive to civil liberty.

“ *Resolved* unanimously, That a committee of twenty-one gentlemen be
“ now appointed to prepare an address to the people, requesting their co-
“ operation with us; and also, a petition to his majesty, stating our griev-
“ ances, and praying a dissolution of the present corrupt parliament, in whom
“ we cannot place any trust or confidence, and that they report the same to
“ this body on Monday the 21st of June instant.”

The committee having at a future meeting made their report, the following
address to the people of Ireland was agreed to and published by that meeting.

“ FRIENDS and COUNTRYMEN,

“ Permit us, the inhabitants of the city of Dublin, with all the affection
“ due to fellow subjects, and that anxiety which every citizen must feel for
“ his native country, to address you on the most important subject, that ever
“ engrossed the attention of a free people.

“ Long and painfully have we endured, in common with you all, the mi-
“ series arising from the abuse of power, and the well known defects in the
“ present state of representation in the Commons House of parliament; defects
“ tending to the total annihilation of our boasted form of government, and

“ productive of the highest oppression to the inhabitants of this loyal and independent nation.

“ It is with reluctance we find ourselves compelled to enter into a detail of grievances, which being felt by all, cannot be unknown to any. But whilst we consider it prudent to justify our proceedings to the world, we must intreat your indulgence, if we state particulars, which might otherwise be thought unnecessary.

“ Perfectly sensible must you be of that aristocratic influence, which has rendered the representation of the people merely nominal, and destroyed that equal balance in the three estates of the legislature, on which alone depends the existence of our glorious constitution. You have beheld the charters granted to divers boroughs in this kingdom, entitling the bodies thereby incorporated to a return of representatives, abused and perverted to the most destructive purposes, inasmuch that the intention of the crown in establishing these borough towns, has been frustrated by the artful practices of designing men; and persons returned to parliament from depopulated places, where scarce any inhabitants exist, or for considerable cities and towns, where the elective franchise is confined to a few. Nor is it less notorious, that the proprietors of the soil, where such depopulated boroughs once stood, have dared to usurp a power of selling seats to members in the present House of Commons, and by such unwarrantable and corrupt means have those purchasers become illegal representatives of the people.

“ Convinced by dear-bought experience of the many evils from hence arising, we have joined in every measure to obtain redress, which has hitherto been pointed out to us by the complaining voice of an injured and insulted kingdom; but unhappily, we have as yet found every attempt ineffectual to restore the constitution to its pure and primitive principles.

“ In vain did the noble assertors of liberty, composing the volunteer army of Ireland (arrayed and embodied at their own expence, the unexampled protectors of their country against foreign foes and domestic usurpation), adjudge by their delegates, agreeable to the desire of this nation, a more equal representation, solemnly and deliberately agreed upon. In vain did the united voice of the electors of this kingdom, through every free country, city, and borough, declare itself in favour of such plan of reform, and instruct their several representatives to support the same. In vain was

“ an

“ an attempt made by the real friends of their country to introduce such
 “ plan into parliament, and obtain it the sanction of a law. The baneful
 “ influence of corruption and venality prevented any success; and with equal
 “ folly and audacity, were the justifiable demands of the people treated with
 “ ignominy and contempt.

“ Had the persons thus obtruded into the parliament of this kingdom con-
 “ sidered it with a due degree of justice and moderation, possibly the legality
 “ of their title to a share in its legislature might have remained unexamined,
 “ or at least uncontroverted. But when usurpation is followed by injury
 “ and insult, that nation must be composed of slaves indeed, which can
 “ tamely submit, without any exertion in its defence.

“ But the policy of our oppressors lost sight of this principle, and not con-
 “ tent with the exercise of an authority unconstitutionally derived, they have
 “ extended it to the entire destruction of our most valuable rights, and our
 “ civil and commercial interests.

“ Hence it is, that during the last session of parliament the most wanton
 “ and reiterated acts of oppression have been multiplied; personal liberty has
 “ been rendered insecure; protecting duties (adopted by every wise nation)
 “ refused; our chartered rights infringed; the subject unconstitutionally and
 “ illegally imprisoned; the trial by jury in many instances suspended; the
 “ freedom of the press (that grand palladium of all our liberties) violated;
 “ an infamous power given to expose and restrain private correspondence; a
 “ large standing army kept up in the time of profound peace; that badge of
 “ slavery the stamp act, so disgracefully altered, as to make it a still greater
 “ grievance, and taxation unnecessarily augmented, to the general ruin of
 “ the nation. Such are the proceedings of a parliament, in which the mem-
 “ bers of the House of Commons do not really represent the people, but have
 “ become the representation of an overgrown and overbearing aristocracy,
 “ raised upon the ruins of our rights and privileges; whereby the original
 “ purpose of the democratic branch of the legislature is defeated, the consti-
 “ tution effectually destroyed, and instead of being a shield against unneces-
 “ sary taxation, the commons are rendered the hired instrument to pillage an
 “ already impoverished and distressed people.

“ Thus, fellow subjects and countrymen, is all confidence in parliament,
 “ and the dignity thereof, destroyed, the trust of representation betrayed, the
 “ instructions of the constituent body of the people disobeyed, commercial

“ interests neglected, and emigration consequently promoted, to the great
 “ discouragement of population and the diminution of the national wealth;
 “ and thus doth experience evince, that a House of Commons under the
 “ undue influence of either of the two other branches of the legislature, is
 “ ever ready to betray the most sacred rights of the people; and we find
 “ that parliaments chosen as they now are, and continuing for eight years as
 “ they now do, will ever be composed for the most part of persons under the
 “ guidance of particular noblemen and others, solely aiming at and perpetually
 “ contending for the power and emoluments of office.

“ Enjoying the advantages lately held out to us by our sister kingdom,
 “ who with equal justice and magnanimity, unequivocally acknowledged and
 “ restored to us our right of exclusive legislative, and to maintain a strict amity
 “ with whom, is not less our inclination than our interest, we have to regret,
 “ that internal situation of our own country, that corruption and venality,
 “ which pervade our senate, and those defects already pointed out in our legislature,
 “ which prevent our pursuing means, that under the free enjoyment
 “ of our constitution, and with the prudent direction of virtuous rulers, might
 “ render us a prosperous, happy, and united kingdom.

“ Failing in every other mode of redress, we have been now induced to
 “ approach the throne, by an humble petition, praying the dissolution of the
 “ present parliament, and seeking that relief from our most gracious sovereign,
 “ which has been indignantly and intemperately refused by those, who
 “ assume to be the delegated servants of the people. Nor do we doubt of
 “ success, if, meeting with the approbation of our fellow subjects (which can
 “ alone render effectual this salutary and necessary measure), we shall be supported
 “ by their warm and zealous co-operation in bringing those national
 “ grievances to the ear of majesty.

“ Convinced of the necessity, we cannot however presume to point out
 “ any specific mode for a parliamentary reform in the representation of the
 “ people: that, in which all are equally concerned, must receive from all their
 “ approbation and support. We call upon you therefore, and thus conjure
 “ you, that in this important work you join with us as fellow subjects, countrymen,
 “ and friends, as men embarked in the general cause, to remove a
 “ general calamity; and for this we propose, that five persons be elected
 “ from each county, city, and great town in this kingdom, to meet in national
 “ congress at some convenient place in this city, on Monday, the 25th day

“ of

“ of October next, there to deliberate, digest and determine on such measures,
 “ as may seem to them most conducive to re-establish the constitution on a
 “ pure and permanent basis, and secure to the inhabitants of this kingdom,
 “ peace, liberty, and safety.

“ And whilst we thus contend, as far as in us lies, for our constitutional
 “ rights and privileges, we recommend to your consideration the state of our
 “ suffering fellow subjects, the Roman Catholics of this kingdom, whose
 “ emancipation from the restraints, under which they still labour, we consider
 “ not only as equitable, but essentially conducive to the general union and
 “ prosperity of the kingdom.

“ Trusting with the most perfect confidence in your concurrence and sup-
 “ port, we entertain the strongest hopes of freeing our country from that
 “ yoke of bondage, which domestic enemies have thus imposed on it. The
 “ majesty of the people will then reassume its proper influence in the guidance
 “ of the state, and divine providence, knowing the justice of our cause, will
 “ graciously assist us in obtaining those rights, to which we are entitled by the
 “ laws of God and nature.

“ ALEX. KIRK PATRICK, jun. }
 “ BENJAMIN SMITH, } Sheriffs.”

And the following is a copy of the petition or remonstrance to his majesty,
 which was also agreed to by the aggregate meeting :

“ To the King's Most Excellent Majesty.

“ The humble Petition of the Freemen, Freeholders, and Inhabitants of
 “ the City of Dublin.

“ MOST GRACIOUS SOVEREIGN,

“ PERMIT us, your loyal and dutiful subjects, with
 “ every sentiment of duty and attachment to your majesty's person, family,
 “ and government, to approach the throne with the greatest respect and
 “ humility, to lay a national grievance of the highest importance to your
 “ crown and dignity, and to the liberties and properties of your people of
 “ Ireland, at your majesty's feet.

“ The grievance your distressed subjects thus humbly presume to lay be-
 “ fore your majesty, is the present illegal and inadequate representation of the
 “ people of this kingdom in parliament; illegal, because the returns of mem-
 “ bers for boroughs are not agreeable to the charters granted for that purpose
 “ by the crown; and inadequate, because there are as many members re-
 “ turned

“ turned for each of those boroughs, by a few voters, as are returned for any county or city in this kingdom.

“ Born in a country where your petitioners, from their earliest infancy, were taught to believe the laws for their government passed through a House of Commons elected by the people, they conceived their liberties founded on the most firm basis ; but finding laws passed, inimical as well to your majesty’s crown as their rights (which are inseparable), they were led into a minute enquiry of the cause, and discovering the same to proceed from the present insufficient mode of representation, and the long duration of parliament, which render even the few members, who are constitutionally elected, nearly independent of their constituents, they now most humbly beg leave to inform your majesty, that men thus elected cease to have any weight with your people.

“ It is to the grand cause of aristocratic influence (jealous, as all inordinate power must be, of whatever may tend to shake its establishment), and to the misrepresentations which have been transmitted to your majesty of your faithful subjects of Ireland, that we attribute many arbitrary and alarming proceedings in the last session of our parliament.

“ A bill for the more equal representation of the people (the desire of millions of your faithful subjects), has been refused even a discussion in our parliament.

“ Protection has been denied to our infant trade and manufactures, which England thinks necessary to the maturity and vigor of hers.

“ A violent attack has been made on the liberty of the press ; that supplement to the laws, and palladium of liberty, a terror only to tyrants, and apostates.

“ Alarming restrictions on the commercial and friendly communications of your majesty’s subjects, have been imposed by the Post Office Act.

“ A general system of prodigality seems to have been adopted for the purpose of burdening our trade, and damping all spirit of industry : and emigrations consequently encouraged, are now encreasing to an alarming degree.

“ A manifest infringement has been made on the ancient and sacred charter of the capital of this realm ; and instead of the constitutional trial by jury, a novel tribunal instituted, from whose sentence there lies no appeal.

“ It is with infinite concern we are obliged to add, that your majesty’s
“ ministers

“ ministers in this kingdom have assisted in all the measures, of which we thus
 “ humbly complain; a circumstance the more extraordinary, as your ma-
 “ jesty has lately thought it necessary to appeal to the British electors at
 “ large, against the power of an aristocracy, and as your majesty’s first mi-
 “ nister in England has virtuously declared himself friendly to the principal
 “ measure, which has been here rejected (we mean a more equal representa-
 “ tion of the people) convinced, that an overbearing aristocracy is not less
 “ hostile to the liberties of the subject, than to the prerogative of the crown.

“ We farther intreat your majesty’s permission to condemn that remnant
 “ of the penal code of laws, which still oppresses our Roman Catholic fellow
 “ subjects; laws which tend to prohibit education and liberality, restrain
 “ certain privileges, and to proscribe industry, love of liberty, and patriotism.

“ Deeply affected by these national calamities, we, your majesty’s faithful
 “ and loyal subjects, the citizens of Dublin, do therefore most humbly beg
 “ leave to supplicate your majesty, that you will be graciously pleased to ex-
 “ ercise your royal inclination to adopt with decision and effect, whatever
 “ your majesty shall collect to be the sense of the people.

“ That your majesty may enjoy every felicity through a long and glorious
 “ reign over loyal and happy subjects, and that your descendants may in-
 “ herit your several dominions till time shall be no more, is, and always will
 “ be our sincere and fervent prayer.

“ Signed by order,

“ ALEX. KIRK PATRICK,

“ BENJAMIN SMITH.”

This petition was presented to the lord lieutenant by the high sheriffs, with an address to his excellency requesting it might be transmitted; to which they received the following answer:

“ GENTLEMEN,

“ AT the same time that I comply with your request, in
 “ transmitting to his majesty a paper signed by you, entitled A Petition of
 “ the Freemen, Freeholders, and Inhabitants of the City of Dublin, I shall
 “ not fail to convey my entire disapprobation of it, as casting unjust reflec-
 “ tions upon the laws and parliament of Ireland, and tending to weaken the
 “ authority of both.”

These proceedings of the city of Dublin were seconded by other parts of the kingdom; but the whole was frustrated by the interposition of govern-
 ment,

ment, and prosecutions by information, &c. were commenced against different persons, by whom such aggregate meetings had been assembled. The high sheriff of the county of Dublin (then Henry Stevens Reilly, Esq.) was sentenced to fine and imprisonment by the Court of King's Bench; however, after a few days' confinement, he was liberated, and the fine reduced on acknowledging his error, and making a public apology in that court.

It may be seen, that the repeated defeats of the advocates for reform in parliament had not abated their ardor in the pursuit of their favorite object. In despair of any deliberate co-operation from parliament, they had confidently turned their applications to the quarter, from whence experience had taught them to look for effectual redress. As government had not hitherto ventured to question the legality of the volunteer associations, the more thinking part of them were astonished and discontented at the strong disapprobation of their conduct conveyed in the lord lieutenant's answer. Although the resolutions and addresses of the aggregate meeting were strongly, and by some thought intemperately expressed, they were notwithstanding the result of much consideration and temperate deliberation.* Such however was the credulous enthusiasm of the majority of them in the cause of reform, that even after the dispiriting and angry answer of the lord lieutenant, they could not be persuaded, that either his grace or his former zealous colleague, Mr. Pitt, had receded from, dropped or renounced the reforming principle they had lately avowed with so much ardor. Accordingly, on the 8th of July, a petition to the king was conveyed to Mr. Pitt, by the inhabitants of Belfast, nearly of the same tenor with that of the citizens of Dublin. In the month of September, Mr. Pitt informed them, in his answer, "That he had undoubtedly been, and still continued, a zealous friend to a reform in par-

* Whilst the business of equal representation was in agitation at a meeting of the convention in Dublin, a pretended letter was produced from Lord Kenmare, purporting to convey the general sentiments of the Roman Catholics of Ireland, in which they were made to express their perfect satisfaction with what had been already done for them, and that they desired no more than peaceably to enjoy the privileges they had obtained. But though this letter were publicly disavowed, both by the respectable person, from whom it was said to have come, and by a general assembly of the committee of the Irish Catholics, who acknowledged themselves to have too great a resemblance to the rest of their species to be desirous of opposing any thing that tended to their relief, and that they should receive with gratitude any indulgence the legislature should be willing to grant them, yet, in the plan of reform digested at that meeting, they were left precisely in the same situation as before.

liament,

“liament, but that he must beg leave to say, that he had been so on grounds very different from those adopted in their petition. That what was there proposed, he considered as tending to produce still greater evils than any of those, which the friends of reform were desirous to remedy.”

The cause of reform received about this time a more fatal blow from the disunion, which broke out amongst the volunteers themselves, on the subject of admitting the Roman Catholics to the rights of election. In an address presented by the Ulster corps to their general, the Earl of Charlemont, after some strong expressions of their detestation of aristocratic tyranny, they hinted at the necessity of calling in the aid of the Catholics, as the most just as well as effectual means of opposing it with success. In answer to this address, the Earl of Charlemont, lamented that, for the first time, he felt himself obliged to differ from them in sentiment. He was free from every illiberal prejudice against the Catholics, and full of goodwill towards that very respectable body, but he could not refrain from the most ardent entreaties, that they would desist from a pursuit, that would fatally clog and impede the prosecution of their favourite purpose.

As this nobleman was highly and deservedly respected, his opinion was eagerly embraced, both by the timid, whose apprehensions were alarmed at the bold extent of the project, and by a great number whose prejudices against the Catholics appear to have been suspended from convenience or fashion though never conquered by principle. In the month of October, the thanks of the corporation of the city of Dublin were voted him for his conduct on that occasion.

The meeting of a national congress was a measure of too alarming a nature, not to attract the most serious attention of government; and it appears to have been their resolution to take the most vigorous steps for preventing it if possible. A few days previous to that which was fixed for the election of delegates for the city of Dublin, the attorney general addressed a letter to the sheriffs, expressing his very great surprise at having read a summons signed by them calling a meeting for the purpose in question. He observed, that by this proceeding, they had been guilty of a most outrageous breach of their duty; and that if they proceeded, they would be responsible to the laws of their country, and he should hold himself bounden to prosecute them in the Court of King's Bench, for a conduct, which he considered so highly criminal, that he could not overlook it. These threats succeeded so far as to

intimidate the sheriffs from attending the meeting in their official capacity; but the meeting was nevertheless holden, delegates were chosen; and in revenge for the attorney's letter, several strong resolutions were agreed to, relative to the right of assembling themselves for the redress of grievances. Government having once set their faces against the election and assembling of delegates, from denouncing threats, they proceeded to punishments.

Mr. Riley, high sheriff for the county of Dublin, in consequence of his having called together, and presided at an assembly of freeholders, who met on the 19th of August, 1764, for the purpose of choosing and instructing their delegates, was the first object of ministerial prosecution. The attorney-general proceeded against him by attachment from the court of King's Bench. The assembly, and the resolutions they came to on that occasion, signed by Mr. Riley, in his character of sheriff for the county, were both declared to be illegal, and Mr. Riley was sentenced by the court to pay a fine of five marks, (3*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) and to be imprisoned one week.

This mode of legal process, except for the purpose of bringing persons before the court, to receive the sentence of such court for contempt of, and disobedience to its orders and directions, has so seldom been resorted to, that even the legality of the process itself, on any other ground, had remained a matter of general doubt and uncertainty.

In the present case it met with much less opposition than might have been expected. Clamours without doors, and debates within, on the subject, there certainly were, but both too feeble and ill-concerted to promise any success. The new division of the volunteers into parties, took off the general attention to this attack upon the use of juries, which, in any other moment, would not have been so tamely tolerated. Of such import is it, when overstrong measures are to be attempted, to prepare the public for the reception of them by internal disunion or alarm. Government did not confine their prosecutions to Mr. Riley. Having once adopted a mode of proceeding, which so effectually answered the end, for which they designed it, informations were moved for, and attachments granted against the different magistrates, who called the meetings, and signed the respective resolutions of the freeholders in the counties of Roscommon and Leitrim. At the same time, the press too came under the lash of the attorney-general; and the printers and publishers of such newspapers, as had inserted the obnoxious resolutions, suffered with the magistrates, who had signed them.

Not-

Notwithstanding these violent measures which administration were pursuing, the national congress met, pursuant to its appointment, on the 25th day of October. But as it was far from being complete in point of number, and several of its most respectable members chose to absent themselves, they adjourned, after having passed a number of resolutions to the same purport with those that had been agreed to at the previous meeting; and exhorted in the most earnest manner the communities, which had not sent representatives, if they respected their own consistency, if they wished for the success of a parliamentary reform, and as they tendered the perpetual liberty and prosperity of their country, not to let pass that opportunity of effecting the great and necessary confirmation of the constitution."

The link of unanimity having been once severed, the fall of the armed associations into difference and contention was much more rapid, than had been their progress to union. The divisions of the volunteers were encouraged by government; and for that purpose discord and turbulence were rather countenanced than checked in many counties, particularly upon the delicate and important expedient of admitting the Catholics to the elective franchise, a question, which it was artfully attempted to connect with the now declining cause of parliamentary reform. Through a long series of years government had never wanted force to quell internal commotions; and it seemed to be now dreaded lest an union of Irishmen should extinguish the old means of creating dissention. The desire of disuniting the volunteers begat inattention to the grievances of the discontented and distressed peasantry of the south: that wretched and lawless rabble once more assumed the stile of *White Boys*: and for some time committed their depredations with impunity, particularly against Kilkenny; until a stop was put to them by the loyal and vigorous efforts of the Rev. Dr. Troy,* then the Roman Catholic bishop of Ossory, and the clergy of his diocese;

* His Pastoral Letter, or Circular Exhortation, may be seen in the Appendix, No. LXXIV. on which occasion the following letter was written to him by command of his excellency.

" *Dublin Castle, 20th Nov. 1784.*

" SIR,

" I read with pleasure your forcible and well-timed Exhortation to the Roman Catholics of the diocese of Ossory, upon the re-appearance in the county of Kilkenny of those execrable rioters formerly called White Boys. I thought it a justice due to you to lay it before the lord-lieutenant; and I have his commands to assure you of the great satisfaction he

cefe; for which fuccefsful exertions he received the moft fatisfactory acknowledgments from government.

As the unanimity of the volunteers diminished, their fpirit and exertions abated: fomething, however, was to be attempted before the meeting of the parliament. On the 2d of January, 1785, the fecond meeting of the delegates was had at Dublin, at which were prefent the representatives of twenty-feven counties, and of moft of the cities and confiderable towns of the kingdom, amounting in the whole to more than 200 perfons. Their proceedings appear to have been of the fame nature as thofe before adopted, with this only difference, that in the propofed application to the Houfe of Commons, it was agreed to confine themfelves to the moft general terms, and to leave the mode of redrefs as free and open as poffible to the confideration of parliament.

The British parliament fat to the 25th of Auguft, 1784, and met again on the 25th of January, 1785: and from his majefty's fpeech it appears, that
 “ their firft concern was the fettlement of all differences with Ireland.
 “ Amongft the objects which now require confideration, I muft particularly
 “ recommend to your earneft attention the adjustments of fuch points in the
 “ commercial intercourfe between Great Britain and Ireland as are not yet
 “ finally arranged: the fyftem, which will unite both kingdoms the moft
 “ clofely on principles of reciprocal advantage, will, I am perfuaded, beft
 “ enfore the general profperity of my dominion.”

The parliament of Ireland met on the 20th of January, 1785, when the lord-lieutenant thus addreffed them:

MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

“ I HAVE his majefty's commands to meet you in parliament, and to defire your advice and co-operation upon thofe affairs of
 “ importance, which in the prefent circumftances of the kingdom require
 “ your moft ferious attention.

“ Whilft I lamented the lawlefs outrages and unconfitutional proceedings
 “ feels in the part you have taken for the prefervation of peace, and preventing the unhappy confe-
 “ quences, which muft follow from thofe wicked and deluded people perfifting in fuch outrageous
 “ violation of the law. I trust your endeavours will have that fuccefs which they merit, and which
 “ claim the efteem of all good men.

“ I have the honour to be, Sir,

“ Your moft obedient humble fervant,

“ THOMAS ORDE.”

“ which

“ which had taken place since your last prorogation, I had the satisfaction to
 “ perceive that these excesses were confined to a few places, and even there
 “ condemned. And I have now the pleasure to observe, that by the salutary
 “ interposition of the laws, the general tranquillity is re-established.

“ I am to recommend in the king’s name to your earnest investigation those
 “ objects of trade and commerce between this kingdom and Great Britain,
 “ which have not yet received their complete adjustment. In framing a
 “ plan with a view to a final settlement, you will be sensible that the interest
 “ of Great Britain and Ireland ought to be for ever united and inseparable.
 “ And his majesty relies on your liberality and wisdom for adopting such an
 “ equitable system for the joint benefit of both countries, and the support of
 “ the common interest, as will secure mutual satisfaction and permanency.”

After the address had been moved and seconded, Lord Edward Fitzgerald said, he would not have had any objection to the address, if it had proceeded in the usual mode, as mere complimentary matter of form; but when it declared an approbation of the firm and moderate measures of his Grace’s government, measures in which he could not coincide, he felt himself under the necessity of opposing that part of the address. He therefore moved, that the words “ experienced virtue and firmness” should be expunged, and the words, “ and whose private virtues entitle him to the esteem and regard of
 “ this house,” should be inserted in their room.

Sir Edward Crofton seconded the amendment.

The great objection which the friends of reform had to the words *firmness* and *moderation*, arose out of the alleged illegality of the attachments issued in the course of the recess out of the King’s Bench. It was asserted on one side, though denied on the other, that the mode of attachment had been adopted because a jury could not be trusted on the occasion. The late prosecutions and attachments were traced up to the ministry, and vehemently inveighed against by the opposition; they were strenuously defended as legal, moderate, and efficient, by the treasury bench.

On the ensuing day a very warm debate arose out of an amendment proposed by Mr. Flood to the address to his majesty: but he was not supported even by several of the staunchest advocates for reform. Much was said both on the illegality of attachments and parliamentary reform, though neither subject were before the house. The attorney-general, (Mr. Fitzgibbon) boldly defended the legality and the necessity of attachments. Mr. Grattan
 most

most severely reprobated the convention of delegates, and lamented the change attempted to be introduced into the volunteer corps. The old original volunteers had become respectable, because they represented the property of the nation; but lately attempts had been made to arm the poverty of the country. He condemned the meeting of the delegates, and all other excesses, because they prejudiced the reform in parliament, and at the same time they insulted its authority.*

His majesty's answer to the addresses, which was communicated to the commons on the 4th of February, 1785, spoke a very determined language against the attempts of the delegates† to dictate to, and overawe the parliament.

The session of 1785, in both kingdoms, was unusual for its duration and the close attention, which the arduous subjects of deliberation forced the members to give to their legislative duties. The commercial arrangements between Great Britain and Ireland, exercised the attention of both parliaments upwards of seven months. In the Irish House of Commons, the advocates for reform were not dispirited by the late answer of his majesty, nor by the many vigorous measures adopted by government, from pursuing their favourite

* Parl. Debates, p. 42.

† This is the answer of his majesty.

“ GEORGE R.

“ His majesty has received with great satisfaction, the dutiful and loyal address of the House of Commons, and the sentiments therein expressed, of their zealous and affectionate attachment to his person and government, as well as their just sense of the experienced moderation and firmness of their present chief governor.

“ His majesty has the fullest reliance, that his faithful commons will make provisions for such supplies as may be suitable to the exigencies of the state, the interests of his people, and the honourable support of his government.

“ His majesty has observed with great concern the popular disturbances, that have lately prevailed, from the intemperance and indiscretion of misguided men; and confides in the constant and strenuous endeavours of his faithful commons of Ireland to prevent their pernicious effects; and their resolution, to reject and suppress every assumed authority, which may attempt to dictate to the legislature, affords his majesty the highest satisfaction. His majesty is fully persuaded, that a proper degree of attention will be shewn in the consideration of such internal regulations as may be necessary for securing the peace and happiness of his subjects in Ireland, as well as for the settlement of all commercial objects between his kingdoms, upon equitable and lasting principles, for the mutual advantage of the different parts of the empire: and they may depend upon his most ready concurrence in the support of such measures as, upon a mature consideration may appear to draw closer those ties of interest and affection between the two countries, which are so essential to their general happiness and prosperity.

G. R.”
object.

object. Upon this ground, Sir Edward Crofton, on the 4th of February,* presented a bill to preserve the freedom of parliament, by ascertaining the qualifications of members to serve in the House of Commons. The tenor of the bill was to make 500*l.* per annum fee simple estate the qualification for a knight of the shire; and 300*l.* per annum of like estate that for a citizen or burghers. This would have established too much independence in the house not to be opposed by the Castle interest. The ardent declarations of Mr. Pitt in the British House of Commons on the first day of the session, upon parliamentary reform, on which, he said, he laboured incessantly, and was the object nearest to his heart, buoyed up their confidence, that in Ireland his friend and colleague in that cause, and now the organ of the British minister in Ireland, would not oppose its progress in that kingdom, where it was more wanted, more generally and urgently called for by the people, and could be more easily effected than in Great Britain, whose prime minister had so confidently boasted of his wishes to bring it to bear.† At a time in which most important

* 4Parl. Debates, p. 79.

† Lord Surrey (now Duke of Norfolk) in observing upon the king's speech, mentioned the attachments, that had lately been issued against sheriffs in Ireland, for having convened what he could not but consider as a meeting perfectly legal, and perfectly constitutional; he trusted therefore something was intended to be done on the subject. To assemble, for the purpose of considering of a parliamentary reform, appeared to him to be the last matter that should be proceeded against; more especially in such an extraordinary way as by attachment. To this, Mr. Pitt said, (17 English Parl. Debates, p. 8) he was not sorry for what the noble lord had said upon that subject; on the contrary, he was extremely glad that a parliamentary reform had been mentioned. Perhaps he did not differ from the noble lord, in thinking that the most practicable mode of accomplishing the object of amending the representation of the people, would have been to bring it explicitly forward in his majesty's speech. Great and wise men had entertained various conceptions of that important matter. He was willing to give it all the fair play, to which the ardent desire of the people, its own momentous consequence, and his sincere inclination entitled it. On this business he laboured incessantly. It was that which, of all others, was the nearest his heart: and at that very early period of the session, to have stated it specifically, was impossible. Much was still to do. His ideas were not matured. It comprehended a great variety of considerations: it related to the essentials or vitals of the constitution; it therefore required the most delicate and unremitted attention: it was a path which he was determined to tread; but he knew with what tenderness and circumspection it became him to proceed. He hoped, however, in a few days, to be able to name a day, on which he should have the honour of submitting his proposition to the house. It was his aim to propose a specific plan of reform, which, in his judgment, for of that only he spoke, and for that only he pledged himself, as every man would undoubtedly judge in so great and critical a case, according to the best of his own judgment, which he presumed would be an improvement of the constitution, as

if

tant and final arrangements had been pending for the commercial intercourse between the sister kingdoms, and when it was notorious that a special treaty of commerce had been long in agitation between Great Britain and France; and the treaty for regulating the commerce between her and the United States of both America and Holland, were still in an incomplete state, it appeared necessary, that Ireland should, particularly as she was now an independent kingdom, know how far her commercial interests were affected by those pending treaties with foreign nations: accordingly, Mr. Corry, on the 8th of February, moved the house, that an humble address should be presented to the lord-lieutenant, that he would be pleased to lay before his majesty the humble address of that house, that his majesty would graciously condescend to order to be laid before that house copies of the preliminary and provisional articles of peace and commerce, and also the definitive treaties of peace and commerce with foreign states, at, and since the conclusion of the last war. This reasonable motion having been instantly opposed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Foster) and the secretary of state (Mr. Orde), the house from that time became diffident in the sincerity of government to adapt the pending arrangements to the rights, interests, and dignity of that kingdom.*

Previous to the meeting of parliament on the 20th of January, the British cabinet, in concert with commissioners appointed on the part of Ireland, had formed a plan for regulating and finally adjusting the commercial intercourse between the two countries: and on the 7th of February Mr. Orde laid it before the House of Commons, in the form of ten separate resolutions or propositions, which he observed were founded on the words of the unanimous

it would confer permanency and effect on those principles which constituted its distinguishing excellence. To this measure he pledged himself, but did not feel any obligation to define it at present; nor was he willing to bring it forward too early, lest he might not leave himself sufficient time for digesting what he should think it incumbent on him to lay before the house. But he was anxious to improve his plan with whatever was requisite to render it effectual, and to bring it on with every solemnity which could contribute to its influence and respectability. He should, therefore, choose, that a motion for a call of the house should precede it, in order that the friends and opposers of the motion might have a fair invitation either to support or contest it.

* Although the great object of the remaining part of the session were the arrangement of the commercial intercourse between the two countries, yet some other measures occasionally occurred in parliament. The Chancellor of the Exchequer stated the national debt then to amount to 2,150,301*l.* 11*s.* 5½*d.* The usual number of 15,000 military was voted, though strongly opposed: and Mr. Gardiner's motion for 20,000*l.* for arraying the militia, passed by a majority of 139 against 63; though it were strenuously opposed by the remaining friends of the volunteers.

address

address of that house at the close of the last session, recommending a plan for a liberal arrangement of commercial intercourse between Great Britain and Ireland, formed upon the broad basis of reciprocal advantage, as the most effectual means of strengthening the empire at large, and cherishing the common interest and brotherly affection of both kingdoms. The consideration of them was recommended to the house in the king's name, and Mr. Secretary went through them separately with some comment on each: little opposition or even observation was made by the house upon them in this stage: Mr. Forbes required time to consider and digest them, and warned the house against precipitancy in adopting them. Mr. Brownlow flew out indignantly at the idea of their becoming a tributary nation: he rejected the gift, and hurled it back with scorn; he never would consent to be a slave, or pay tribute. Such propositions had been formerly made to America, and they had seen the effects. Mr. Flood cautioned the members against going into a debate upon the propositions, as there was then no question before the house. On the 11th and 12th of February the house was in committee upon the resolutions.* They were strongly opposed by some, but not by all of the opposition.

* 4 Journ. Lords, p. 550. The following was the form of the original propositions.

“ 1st. *Resolved*, That it is highly important to the general interest of the British empire, that the trade between Great Britain and Ireland be encouraged and extended as much as possible; and for that purpose, that the intercourse and commerce be finally settled and regulated on permanent and equitable principles for the mutual benefit of both countries.

“ 2d. *Resolved*, That towards carrying into full effect so desirable a settlement, it is fit and proper, that all articles, not the growth or manufacture of Great Britain or Ireland, should be imported into each kingdom from the other, reciprocally, under the same regulation, and at the said duties, if subject to duties, to which they are liable when imported directly from the place of their growth, product, or manufacture; and that all duties originally paid on importation into either country respectively, shall be fully drawn back on exportation to the other.

“ 3d. *Resolved*, That for the same purpose, it is proper, that no prohibition should exist in either country, against the importation, use, or sale of any article, the growth, product, or manufacture of the other; and that the duty on the importation of every such article, if subject to duty, in either country, should be precisely the same in the one country as in the other, except where an addition may be necessary in either country, in consequence of an internal duty on any such article of its own consumption.

“ 4th. *Resolved*, That in all cases where the duties on articles of the growth, product, or manufacture of either country, are different on the importation into the other, it would be expedient, that they should be reduced in the kingdom where they are the highest, to the amount

tion. Of all the gentlemen, who ultimately opposed them, Mr. Grattan appears to have entertained the most favourable opinion of them in the first instance.

“ payable in the other, and that all such articles should be exportable from the kingdom, into which
 “ they shall be imported, as free from duty as the similar commodities or home manufactures of
 “ the same kingdom.

5th. *Resolved*, That for the same purpose, it is also proper, that in all cases where either kingdom shall charge articles of its own consumption, with an internal duty on the manufacture, or a duty on the material, the same manufacture, when imported from the other, may be charged with a further duty on importation, to the same amount as the internal duty on the manufacture, or to an amount adequate to countervail the duty on the material, and shall be entitled to such drawbacks or bounties on exportation, as may leave the same subject to no heavier burden, than the home made manufacture; such farther duty to continue so long only as the internal consumption shall be charged with the duty or duties, to balance which it shall be imposed, or until the manufacture, coming from the other kingdom, shall be subjected there to an equal burden, not drawn back or compensated on exportation.

“ 6th. *Resolved*, That in order to give permanency to the settlement now intended to be established, it is necessary, that no prohibition, or new or additional duties, should be hereafter imposed in either kingdom, on the importation of any article of the growth, product, or manufacture of the other, except such additional duties as may be requisite to balance duties on internal consumption, pursuant to the foregoing resolution.

“ 7th. *Resolved*, That for the same purpose, it is necessary farther, that no prohibition, or new or additional duties, should be hereafter imposed in either kingdom, on the exportation of any article of native growth, product, or manufacture from thence to the other, except such as either kingdom may deem expedient, from time to time, upon corn, meal, malt, flour, and biscuits; and also except where there now exists any prohibition which is not reciprocal, or any duty which is not equal in both kingdoms, in every which case the prohibition may be made reciprocal, or the duties raised so as to make them equal.

“ 8th. *Resolved*, That for the same purpose, it is necessary, that no bounties whatsoever should be paid, or payable, in either kingdom, on the exportation of any article to the other, except such as relate to corn, meal, malt, flour, and biscuits, and such as are in the nature of drawbacks or compensations for duties paid, and that no duty should be granted in this kingdom on the exportation of any article imported from the British plantations, or any manufacture made of such article, unless in cases where a similar bounty is payable in Britain, on exportation from thence, or where such bounty is merely in the nature of a drawback or compensation of, or for duties paid over and above any duties paid thereon in Britain.

“ 9th. *Resolved*, That it is expedient, for the general benefit of the British empire, that the importation of articles from foreign states should be regulated from time to time, in each kingdom, on such terms, as may afford an effectual preference to the importation of similar articles of the growth, product, or manufacture of the other.

“ 10th. *Resolved*, That it is essential to the commercial interests of this country to prevent, as much

stance. "I am anxious," said he, "to say a few words, both on the new resolutions and the plan. The resolutions I think absolutely indispensable. They have a threefold principle. The first is, after the expences of the nation are paid, to contribute to the general expence of the empire. The second is, that by making the surplus not applicable to the general expence till all expences are paid, it interests both the British and the Irish ministers in Irish œconomy. The third is, to subject that surplus to the control of the Irish parliament. If the other resolutions had not passed, these ought still to be supported. They put an end to debt; they decide the great question of 1753; they establish Irish œconomy; they make the British ministry a guarantee to the integrity of this house, and the œconomy of Irish administration. The plan is open, fair, and just, and such as the British minister can justify to both nations. He gave to England what she had a right to expect, and perhaps they could not give her more."

When all the resolutions had been agreed to, the chancellor of the Exchequer moved for an address to his majesty, expressive of their gratitude to his majesty for the gracious recommendation of the plan to the consideration of the house, and of their sanguine hopes of the happy effects thereof. On the same day (12 Feb. 1785) the resolutions and the address were sent to the lords, and unanimously agreed to. On the 22d of the month, the eleven resolutions agreed to by the Houses of Lords and Commons of Ireland were read in a committee of the British House of Commons, when Mr. Pitt opened the business by calling upon the committee to debarass their minds of all bias and prepossession, which so much pains had been taken to create and diffuse throughout every part of the kingdom. In treating that important question, he would beg leave to recal their attention to what had been, and what was the relative situation of the two countries. They would recollect that, from the Revolution to a period within the memory of every man, who heard him,

"much as possible, an accumulation of national debt, and therefore it is highly expedient, that the annual revenues of this kingdom should be made equal to its annual expences."

"11th. *Resolved*, That for the better protection of trade, whatever sum the gross hereditary revenue of this kingdom (after deducting all drawbacks, repayments, or bounties, granted in the nature of drawbacks,) shall produce, over and above the sum of 656,000*l.* in each year of peace, wherein the annual revenues shall be equal to the annual expences, and in each year of war, without regard to such equality, should be appropriated towards the support of the naval force of the empire, in such manner as the parliament of this kingdom shall direct."

indeed until these very few years, the system had been that of debarring Ireland from the enjoyment and use of her own resources; to make the kingdom completely subservient to the interests and opulence of this country, without suffering her to share in the bounties of nature, in the industry of her citizens, or making them contribute to the general interests and strength of the empire. This system of cruel and abominable restraint had however been exploded. It was at once harsh and unjust, and it was as impolitic as it was oppressive; for however necessary it might be to the partial benefit of districts in Britain, it promoted not the real prosperity and strength of the empire. That which had been the system, counteracted the kindness of Providence, and suspended the industry and enterprize of man. Ireland was put under such restraint, that she was shut out from every species of commerce. She was restrained from sending the produce of her own soil to foreign markets, and all correspondence with the colonies of Britain was prohibited to her, so that she could not derive their commodities but through the medium of Britain. This was the system, which had prevailed, and this was the state of thralldom, in which that country had been kept ever since the Revolution. Some relaxation of the system, indeed, took place at an early period of the present century. Somewhat more of the restrictive laws were abated in the reign of George II. but it was not until a time nearer to our own day, and indeed within the last seven years, that the system had been completely reversed.*

It was not to be expected but that when Ireland, by the more enlarged sentiments of the present age, had acquired an independent legislature, she would instantly export her produce and manufactures to all the markets of the world. She did so, and this was not all. England, without any compact or bargain, generously admitted her to a share in her colonies. She gave her liberty to import directly, and to re-export to all the world, except to Britain, the produce of her colonies. Thus much was done some years ago; but to this moment no change had taken place in the intercourse between Great Britain and Ireland themselves. Some trivial points indeed had been changed; but no considerable change had taken place in our manufactures exported to Ireland, or in theirs imported to England. That, therefore, which had

* These melancholy truths, so strongly stated by Mr. Pitt, of the degraded and distressed situation of Ireland, under the ancient system of its government, are so many consolatory reasons for the Irish finding in an incorporate union the impossibility of their repetition.

been

been done, was still viewed by the people of Ireland as insufficient; and clamours were excited, and suggestions published in Dublin and elsewhere, of putting duties on our produce and manufactures, under the name of protecting duties.

Having thus far relaxed from the system, which had been maintained since the revolution; having abandoned the commercial subserviency, in which we had so long persevered, and having so wisely and justly put them into a state, in which they might cultivate and profit from the gifts of nature; having secured to them the advantages of their arts and industry, it was to be observed, that we had abolished one system, and had established another; but we had left the intercourse between the two countries exactly where it was. There were, he said, but two possible systems for countries situated in relation to one another like Britain and Ireland. The one, of having the smaller completely subservient, and subordinate to the greater, to make the one, as it were, an instrument of advantage, and to make all her efforts operate in favor, and conduce merely to the interest of the other. This system we had tried in respect to Ireland. The other was, a participation and community of benefits, and a system of equality and fairness, which, without tending to aggrandize the one or depress the other, should seek the aggregate interests of the empire. Such a situation of commercial equality, in which there was to be a community of benefits, demanded also a community of burdens; and it was this situation, in which he was anxious to place the two countries. It was on that general basis, that he was solicitous of moving the proposition, which he held in his hand, to complete a system, which had been left unfinished and defective.

Mr. Pitt, after having fully passed in review the different benefits lately granted to Ireland by the British parliament, observed, that the concessions now proposed to be made to that kingdom, in order to put the two countries on a fair and equal footing, he should reduce to two heads:

First, The importation of the produce of our colonies in the West Indies and America through Ireland into Great Britain.

Second, A mutual exchange between the two countries of their respective productions and manufactures, upon equal terms.

With regard to the first, he allowed it had the appearance of militating against the navigation laws, for which England had ever had the greatest partiality. But as she had already allowed Ireland to trade immediately and directly

directly with the colonies, he could not see how the importing of the produce of those colonies circuitously through Ireland into Great Britain could injure the colonial trade of this country, which was a direct one, and therefore to be made at a less expence and risk, than that which was circuitous.

In return for these concessions on the part of Great Britain, he proposed, that Ireland should agree to the payment of a certain stipulated sum yearly out of the surplus of her hereditary revenue, towards defraying the general expences of the empire. He then concluded a very elaborate speech with moving the following general resolution: " That it was highly important
" to the general interests of the empire, that the commercial intercourse be-
" tween Great Britain and Ireland should be finally adjusted, and that Ireland
" should be admitted to a permanent and irrevocable participation of the
" commercial advantages of this country, when her parliament should perma-
" nently and irrevocably secure an aid out of the surplus of the hereditary
" revenue of that kingdom, towards defraying the expence of protecting the
" general commerce of the empire in time of peace."

Although the committee were not called upon that night to give any opinion upon the resolution, Lord North, Mr. Fox and several of their friends spoke upon the subject, lest their silence might be interpreted into consent or approbation. Whereas they much doubted, whether any system of intercourse were at that time necessary to be arranged between Great Britain and Ireland: and if so, whether the system, of which the right honourable gentleman had given the outline, were such as policy, expediency, and good sense required to be adopted.

Mr. Fox entered more into the detail of the necessary effects of the resolutions, and concluded therefrom, that the whole tendency of the propositions appeared to him to go the length of appointing Ireland the sole guardian of the laws of navigation, and grand arbitress of all the commercial interests of the empire; a trust he felt no sort of inclination to part from out of our own hands, not even to delegate to Ireland, of whose generosity, loyalty, and gratitude, no man entertained a higher opinion.

A fortnight elapsed before the subject again made its appearance; during which time a report, prepared by a committee of the board of trade and plantations, was laid by the minister upon the table of the House of Commons, to assist its deliberations. This report was stated to be founded upon the de-
clarations

clarations and opinions of some of the principal manufacturers and merchants in the kingdom, who had been examined by the above-mentioned committee, and its particular object was to prove the expediency of that part of the system, which related to the reduction of the duties payable upon the importation of Irish produce and manufactures into Great Britain, to what the same sort of articles were charged with in this country.

In the mean time the merchants and manufacturers, who had been examined before the committee, joined by great numbers of others from every part of the nation, met together for the purpose of taking the Irish propositions into their consideration. During the course of their proceedings it appeared, that the opinions of the former were in direct contradiction to the inferences, which had been drawn from their examination in the report laid before parliament. Whether this were occasioned by any change, which upon a fuller consideration had taken place in the minds of the merchants and manufacturers themselves, or whether the committee of the board of trade and plantations had strained and perverted their declarations, it is not easy to determine. However, the consequence was, that it threw a considerable degree of discredit upon the report itself, and seemed to point out the necessity there was for the House of Commons to examine the different commercial and manufacturing bodies concerned, at their own bar. This mode of proceeding gave the first check to the system in its progress through the house, whilst without doors it became more unpopular, in proportion as it became more thoroughly investigated; yet it must be allowed, that its unpopularity generally arose from different grounds.

During the months of March and April, and even until the middle of the month of May, the house was occupied in receiving petitions, and hearing evidence of manufacturers and merchants of every description. The first of these petitions was from Liverpool: it was presented on the 3d of March by Mr. Gascoigne, and drew a considerable long speech from Mr. Pitt, to refute the conclusions drawn by the petitioners from their own premises. On the 16th of March Mr. Stanley presented a petition from Lancashire, signed by eighty thousand persons: sixty-four petitions in the whole* were pre-

* Mr. Jenkinson in argument in favour of the measure observed, that the number of petitions was no matter of triumph, for that in Lord North's administration fifty-one petitions had been presented in favour of Ireland.

presented against the propositions, from which the opposition strongly urged, that the sense of the country was against them. On no subject had Mr. Pitt ever spoken with more warmth and zeal. On the 12th of May, 1785, Mr. Pitt brought forward, in consequence or under pretext of the new lights thrown upon the subject from the examinations, petitions, and reports, a new series of propositions or resolutions,* twenty in number, some of the additional
being

* The following was the form of the new resolutions or propositions, viz.

I. That it is highly important to the interests of both countries, that the commerce between Great Britain and Ireland should be finally regulated on permanent and equitable principles, for the mutual benefit of both countries.

II. That a full participation of commercial advantages should be permanently secured to Ireland, whenever a provision, equally permanent and secure, shall be made by the parliament of that kingdom towards defraying, in proportion to its growing prosperity, the necessary expences in time of peace, of protecting the trade and general interests of the empire.

III. That towards carrying into full effect so desirable a settlement, it is fit and proper, that all articles, not the growth or manufacture of Great Britain or Ireland, "except those of the growth, produce, or manufacture, of any of the countries beyond the Cape of Good Hope, to the Straights of Magellan," should be imported into each kingdom from the other reciprocally, under the same regulations, and at the same duties, (if subject to duties) to which they "would be" liable when imported directly from the country or place from whence the same may "have been imported into Great Britain or Ireland respectively, as the case may be;" and that all duties originally paid on importation into either country respectively, except on arrack and foreign brandy, and on rum, and all other sorts of strong waters not imported from the British colonies in the West Indies, shall be fully drawn back on exportation to the other. "But, nevertheless, that the duties shall continue to be protected and guarded, as at present, by withholding the drawback, until a certificate from the proper officers of the revenue in the kingdom, to which the export may be made, shall be returned and compared with the entry outwards."

IV. That it is highly important to the general interests of the British empire, that the laws for regulating trade and navigation should be the same in Great Britain and Ireland; and, therefore, that it is essential towards carrying into effect the present settlement, that all laws which have been made, or shall be made in Great Britain, for securing exclusive privileges to the ships and mariners of Great Britain, Ireland, and the British colonies and plantations, and for regulating and restraining the trade of the British colonies and plantations, such laws imposing the same restraints, and "conferring the same benefits on the subjects of both kingdoms, should" be in force in Ireland, "by laws to be passed by the parliament of that kingdom for the same time, and" in the same manner as in Great Britain.

V. That it is farther essential to this settlement, that all goods and commodities of the growth, produce, or manufacture, of British or foreign colonies in America, or the West Indies, and the British or foreign settlements on the coast of Africa, imported into Ireland, should on importation,
be

being supplemental, others explanatory, and several entirely new. The chief objects of additional propositions were to provide, 1st. That whatever navigation

be subject to the same duties "and regulations" as the like goods are, or from time to time shall be subject to, upon importation into Great Britain; "or if prohibited from being imported into Great Britain, shall in like manner be prohibited from being imported into Ireland."

VI. That in order to prevent illicit practices, injurious to the revenue and commerce of both kingdoms, it is expedient, that all goods, whether of the growth, produce, or manufacture of Great Britain or Ireland, or of any foreign country, which shall hereafter be imported into Great Britain from Ireland, or into Ireland from Great Britain, should be put, by laws to be passed in the parliament of the two kingdoms, under the same regulations with respect to bonds, caskets, and other instruments, to which the like goods are now subject in passing from one port of Great Britain to another.

VII. That for the like purpose, it is also expedient, that when any goods, the growth, produce, or manufacture of the British West India islands, "or any other of the British colonies or plantations," shall be shipped from Ireland for Great Britain, they should be accompanied with such original certificates of the revenue offices of the said colonies as shall be required by the law on importation into Great Britain; and that when the whole quantity included in one certificate shall not be shipped at any one time, the original certificate, properly indorsed as to quantity, should be sent with the first parcel; to identify the remainder, if shipped at any future period, new certificates should be granted by the principal officers of the ports in Ireland, extracted from a register of the original documents, specifying the quantities before shipped from thence, by what vessels, and to what ports.

VIII. That it is essential for carrying into effect the present settlement, that all goods exported from Ireland to the British colonies in the West Indies, or in America, "or to the British settlements on the coast of Africa," should from time to time be made liable to such duties and drawbacks, and put under such regulations as may be necessary, in order that the same may not be exported with less incumbrance of duties or impositions than the like goods shall be burthened with when exported from Great Britain.

IX. That it is essential to the general commercial interests of the empire, "that so long as the parliament of this kingdom shall think it advisable that the commerce to the countries beyond the Cape of Good Hope shall be carried on solely by an exclusive company, having liberty to import into the port of London only, no goods of the growth, produce, or manufacture of any countries beyond the Cape of Hope should be importable into Ireland from any foreign country, or from any settlement in the East Indies belonging to any such foreign country; and that no goods of the growth, produce, or manufacture of the said countries should be allowed to be imported into Ireland but through Great Britain; and it shall be lawful to export such goods of the growth, produce, or manufacture of any of the countries beyond the Cape of Good Hope to the Straights of Magellan from Great Britain to Ireland, with the same duties retained thereon as are now retained on their being exported to that kingdom; but that an account shall be kept of the duties retained, and the net drawback on the said goods imported to Ireland; and that the

Vol. II. Q " amount

vigation laws the British parliament should thereafter find it necessary to enact for the preservation of her marine, the same should be passed by the legislature

“ amount thereof shall be remitted by the receiver general of his majesty's customs in Great Britain to the proper officer of the revenue in Ireland, to be placed to the account of his majesty's revenue there, subject to the disposal of the parliament of that kingdom; and that whenever the commerce to the said countries shall cease to be carried on by an exclusive company in the goods of the produce of countries beyond the Cape of Good Hope to the Streights of Magellan, the goods should be importable into Ireland from countries from which they may be importable to Great Britain, and no other; and that no vessel should be cleared out from Ireland for any part of the countries from the Cape of Good Hope to the Streights of Magellan, but such as shall be freighted in Ireland by the said exclusive company, and shall have sailed from the port of London; and that the ships going from Great Britain to any of the said countries beyond the Cape of Good Hope should not be restrained from touching at any of the ports in Ireland, and taking on board there any of the goods of the growth, produce, or manufacture of Great Britain.”

X. That no prohibition should exist in either country, against the importation, use, or sale of any article, the growth, or manufacture of the other; except such as either kingdom may judge expedient, from time to time, upon corn, meal, malt, flour, and biscuits; “ and except such qualified prohibitions, at present contained in any act of the British or Irish parliament as do not absolutely prevent the importation of goods or manufactures, or materials of manufactures, but only regulate the weight, the size, the packages, or other particular circumstances, or prescribe the built or country, and dimensions of the ships importing the same; and also, except on ammunition, arms, gunpowder, and other utensils of war, importable only by virtue of his majesty's license;” and that the duty on the importation of every such article (if subject to duty in either country) should be precisely the same in the one country as in the other, except where an addition may be necessary in either country, in consequence of an internal duty on any such article of its own consumption, “ or in consequence of internal bounties in the country where such article is grown, produced, or manufactured, and except such duties as either kingdom may judge expedient, from time to time, upon corn, meal, malt, flour, and biscuits.”

XI. That in all cases where the duties on articles of the growth, produce, or manufacture of either country, are different on the importation into the other, it is expedient that they should be reduced, in the kingdom where they are the highest, to an “ amount not exceeding” the amount payable in the other;” so that the same shall not be less than ten and a half per cent, upon “ any article which was charged with a duty, on importation into Ireland, of ten and a half per cent, or upwards, previous to the 17th day of May, 1782;” and that all such articles should be exportable from this kingdom, into which they shall be imported, as free from duty as the similar commodities or home manufactures of the same kingdom.

XII. That it is also proper, that in all cases where the articles of the consumption of either kingdom shall be charged with an internal duty on the manufacture, the said manufacture, when imported from the other, may be charged with a farther duty on importation, adequate to countervail the internal duty on the manufacture “ as far as relates to the duties now charged thereon;” such farther

gislature of Ireland. 2dly. Against the importing into Ireland, and from thence into Great Britain, of any other West India merchandizes than such

as

farther duty to continue so long only as the internal consumption shall be charged with the duty or duties to balance which it shall be imposed; and that where there is a duty on the importation of the raw material of any manufacture in one kingdom, greater than the like duty on raw materials in the other, such manufacture may, on its importation "into the other kingdom," be charged with such a countervailing duty as may be sufficient to subject the same, so imported, to "burdens" "adequate to those which" the manufacture composed of the like raw material is subject to, in consequence of duties on the importation of such material in the kingdom into which such manufacture is so imported; and the said manufacture, so imported, shall be entitled to such drawbacks or bounties on exportation, as may leave the same subject to no heavier burden than the home made manufacture.

XIII. That, in order to give permanency to the settlement now intended to be established, it is necessary, that no new or additional duties should be hereafter imposed in either kingdom, on the importation of any article of the growth, produce, or manufacture of the other, except such additional duties as may be requisite to balance the duties on internal consumption, pursuant to the foregoing resolution, or in consequence of bounties remaining on such articles when exported to the other kingdom.

XIV. That for the same purpose, it is necessary, farther, that no prohibition, or new additional duties, shall be hereafter imposed in either kingdom, on the exportation of any article of native growth, produce, or manufacture "from the one kingdom" to the other, except such as either kingdom may deem expedient, from time to time, upon corn, meal, malt, flour, and biscuits.

XV. That for the same purpose, it is necessary, that no bounties whatsoever should be paid or payable in either kingdom, on the exportation of any article to the other, except such as relate to corn, meal, malt, flour, and biscuits, "and except also the bounties at present given by Great Britain," on beer, and spirits distilled from corn; and such as are in the nature of drawbacks or compensation for duties paid, and that no bounty should be "payable" on the exportation of any article to any British colonies or plantations, "or to the British settlements on the coast of Africa," or on the exportation of any article imported from the British plantations, "or from the British settlements on the coast of Africa, or British settlements in the East Indies;" or any manufacture made of such article, unless in cases where a similar bounty is payable in Great Britain, on exportation from thence, or where such bounty is merely in the nature of a drawback or compensation of or for duties paid, over and above any duties paid thereon in Britain; and where "any internal" "bounty shall be given in either kingdom, on any goods manufactured therein, and shall remain" "on such goods when exported, a countervailing duty adequate thereto may be laid upon the importation of the said goods into the other kingdom."

XVI. That it is expedient for the general benefit of the British empire, that the importation of articles from foreign "countries" should be regulated from time to time in each kingdom on such terms as may "effectually favor" the importation of similar articles of the growth, product, or manufacture of the other, "except in the case of materials of manufactures, which are, or here-

as were the produce of our own colonies; and 3dly. That Ireland should debar itself from any of the countries beyond the Cape of Good Hope to the Streights of Magellan, so long as it should be thought necessary to continue the charter of the English East India Company.

In the course of the debates upon the propositions as they stood with these amendments and additions, that which met with the most vigorous opposition (independent of such general reasoning as went against the system altogether) was the fourth, in which Great Britain, it was contended, assumed both a present and a future power to bind Ireland by such acts, as she should pass relative to the trade and commerce of both kingdoms. This was stated to be a resumption of the right of legislating for Ireland, which this country had renounced.

“ after may be allowed to be imported from foreign countries, duty free; and that in all cases where
 “ any articles are or may be subject to higher duties on importation into this kingdom, from the
 “ countries belonging to any of the States of North America, than the like goods are or may be
 “ subject to when imported, as the growth, produce, or manufacture of the British colonies and
 “ plantations, or as the produce of the fisheries carried on by British subjects, such articles shall
 “ be subject to the same duties on importation into Ireland, from the countries belonging to any of
 “ the States of North America, as the same are or may be subject to on importation from the said
 “ countries into this kingdom.”

“ That it is expedient, that measures should be taken to prevent disputes touching the exercise
 “ of the right of the inhabitants of each kingdom to fish on the coast of any part of the British
 “ dominions.”

XVIII. That it is expedient, that “ such privileges of printing and vending books as are or may
 “ be legally possessed within Great Britain under the grant of the crown or otherwise, and” the copy-
 rights of the authors and booksellers of Great Britain, should continue to be protected in the man-
 ner they are at present, by the laws of Great Britain; and that it is just that measures should be
 taken by the parliament of Ireland for giving the like protection to the copy-rights of the authors
 and booksellers of that kingdom.

“ XIX. That it is expedient, that regulations should be adopted with respect to patents to be
 “ hereafter granted for the encouragement of new inventions, so that the rights, privileges, and re-
 “ strictions thereon granted and contained, shall be of equal duration and force throughout Great
 “ Britain and Ireland.”

XX. That the appropriation of whatever sum the gross hereditary revenue of the kingdom of
 Ireland (the due collection thereof being secured by permanent provisions) shall produce, after
 deducting all drawbacks, repayments, or bounties granted in the nature of drawbacks, over and
 above the sum of six hundred and fifty-six thousand pounds in each year, towards the support of
 the naval force of the empire, to be applied in such manner as the parliament of Ireland shall direct,
 by an act to be passed for that purpose, will be a satisfactory provision, proportioned to the growing
 prosperity of that kingdom, towards defraying, in time of peace, the necessary expences of protect-
 ing the trade and general interests of the empire.

On

On one hand it was argued, against the propositions, that the house ought to congratulate with itself upon its happy escape from the system proposed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer but two months since; all opposition to which was then treated as the effect of faction and disappointment. If the original resolutions had passed, they would have lost for ever the monopoly of the East India trade; they must have hazarded all the revenue arising from spirituous liquors; they would have sacrificed the whole of the navigation laws of this country. Had these resolutions passed into a law, they would have risked the loss of the colonial market for the manufactures of Great Britain, and incurred the most extensive danger to the colonies themselves; they would have left it in the power of Ireland to have drawn a revenue from our consumption. The just alarm of the minister on the subject of the navigation laws, sufficiently appeared from the extraordinary nature of the remedy he had thought it expedient to adopt, which was no other than to assert that, notwithstanding the independence of Ireland, she must still in commercial laws and external legislation be governed by Britain. That the wild scheme of extravagant speculation comprized in the resolutions, did not originate with the Irish nation. That a stranger had been sent thither to offer a nostrum of his own invention for the relief of a disordered state. For the irritation and ill humour existing in that country, ministers were responsible. The violences which they committed in Ireland merited the most decisive and general reprobation. Their attacks on the liberty of the press; their endeavours to prevent legal meetings, for the purpose of deliberating on the best means of reforming the national representation; their proceedings against men by summary attachment, were measures which might well be supposed to inflame the minds of the people of Ireland. That now imprudent insult was to be compensated by imprudent concession. But let the house beware of a design so insidious and so ruinous as that of a commutation of English commerce for Irish slavery. The propositions, as they were even now modified, were far too complicated and extensive to be voted by the majority of the members of that house, on any other ground than that of confidence in the minister: and surely the right honourable gentleman had sufficiently demonstrated, that implicit confidence in him was as dangerous as it was absurd; that infallibility was no more his prerogative, than that of others.

On the other hand it was argued in favor of the system, that it was a measure

fire of absolute necessity, in order to put an end to the discontents, which prevailed to so alarming a degree in the sister kingdom. That if the present propositions were not passed into a law, all that had already been done in favor of Ireland would prove nugatory, as it was clearly inadequate to the expectations of that country.

That with respect to the fourth proposition, it was a condition, which the safety of our own navigation laws made it necessary to annex to the boon granted to Ireland. That it was unfair to infer from thence, that the British legislature had any views of trenching on the independence of Ireland, since it left to that kingdom the option of taking, or refusing the advantages holden out to her, subject to such a condition. That the condition itself was such as had frequently been adopted in the negotiations of independent states; as in the late treaty betwixt this kingdom and France, when the latter bound herself to publish certain edicts, as soon as other acts stipulated on our part, were made known to that country.

With respect to the disadvantages, which it had been supposed our manufacturers would have to encounter from the comparative small price of labour in Ireland, it was said, such a supposition arose from a misconception of facts. That the wages of artizans and manufacturers, although not of common labourers, were higher there than in this country, and therefore there was little likelihood of their being able to undersell us on that ground. Nor could our commerce be in any danger from the reasons, which had been alledged, since the provisions and restrictions contained in the propositions, were sufficient as well to prevent any clandestine importation of foreign goods into Ireland, as to insure the duties payable on all such as might be legally imported.

The great contest upon these propositions, was on the 12th of May, when the house, at eight o'clock in the morning, divided, 125 for the question of adjournment, and 249 against it.* Notwithstanding this triumph of the minister,

* It is impossible, and perhaps unnecessary, for any historical purpose, to follow the different speakers through the long, animated, and often instructive debates and conversations upon these propositions. In one of them (on the 19th of May, 18 Parl. Debates, p. 333) Mr. Burke, after a most grateful apostrophe to this country for the signal favors and honors heaped upon him, gave this just and beautiful picture of the relative superiority of this over his own country.—“To consult the interests of England and Ireland, to unite and consolidate them into one, was a task he would undertake, as that by which he could best discharge the duties he owed to both. To Ireland, independence

nister, Mr. Pelham again divided the house, but with the like effect, on an amendment, seconded by Lord Surrey, for inserting after the words *commercial*
advan-

“ pendency of legislature had been given ; she was now a co-ordinate, though less powerful state ;
 “ but pre-eminence and dignity were due to England ; it was she alone that must bear the weight
 “ and burden of the empire ; she alone must pour out the ocean of wealth necessary for the defence
 “ of it : Ireland, and other parts, might empty their little urns to swell the tide ; they might wield
 “ their little puny tridents ; but the great trident that was to move the world, must be grasped by
 “ England alone, and dearly it cost her to hold it. Independence of legislature had been granted
 “ to Ireland ; but no other independence could Great Britain give her, without reversing the order
 “ and decree of nature : Ireland could not be separated from England ; she could not exist without
 “ her ; she must ever remain under the protection of England, her guardian angel.”

On the same occasion Mr. Fox gave the following historical account of these propositions, (18
 Parl. Debates, p. 296) — “ In the administration of which I made a part, their legislature was de-
 “ clared to be independent ; and in addresses from both houses of parliament, they professed them-
 “ selves so entirely content, as not to consider it possible that any subsequent question of political
 “ division could arise between the two kingdoms. Yet, in the very next session, they gave indica-
 “ tions of new dissatisfaction, and farther concessions were made. How are we then to argue from
 “ these facts ? One would imagine, that the most effectual and satisfactory method of quieting the
 “ apprehensions, or relieving the exigencies of a distressed country, would be that of appealing to
 “ their own testimony for a knowledge of their circumstances ; to collect information from them-
 “ selves ; to desire them to state, in their own persons, the measure of their calamities, and the
 “ best expedients for the relief of them. This was precisely the way pursued heretofore. The con-
 “ cessions were granted on the declarations of the best informed men in the land ; men, the best
 “ qualified to know the state, the wants, and the expectations of the kingdom ; Mr. Hufsey Burgh
 “ and Mr. Grattan ; names which no man could mention but with the sincerest and most cordial
 “ respect, were the authorities on which England proceeded, and on which she relied. But this,
 “ it seems, however specious and natural, was not the proper method of ascertaining the wants,
 “ or wishes of another kingdom. The true and only means of finally concluding all disputes with
 “ Ireland, is to send a stranger there, and order him to address himself to their senate in such
 “ language as this :—‘ Hear me, ye men of ignorance and credulity ! you know nothing of what
 “ you want, what you wish, or what would be good for you : trust yourselves to me, I am perfect
 “ master of all your infirmities ; here is the specific that will cure you, the infallible nostrum for all
 “ ailments.’ It seems that this is the only conciliatory expedient for administering to the relief of a
 “ disordered state, not to suffer the inhabitants to speak, but to send a man amongst them ignorant
 “ at once of their exigencies, their grievances, and their policy, to propose wild schemes of
 “ extravagant speculation, and prescribe for the disorder without the painful tediousness of
 “ trying to understand it. In compliance with this new idea, Mr. Orde, an English gentleman,
 “ the secretary to an English nobleman, the lord-lieutenant for the time, rises up and proposes a
 “ set of resolutions, which he pledges himself to carry into complete execution. These resolutions
 “ are brought to England, and after two months discussion, are completely and fundamentally al-
 “ tered. Upon these resolutions the right honorable gentleman thinks himself warranted to say that
 “ the

advantages in the second resolution, the words, “ *as far as may be consistent with the essential interest of the manufacturers, revenue, commerce, and navigation of Great Britain.*”

The propositions, after having been agitated upwards of three months, with unusual warmth on both sides, and after having received a variety of amendments and alterations, finally passed the House of Commons by a large majority, on the 30th of May, on which day they were carried up to the lords. Here again they became the subject of much laborious investigation, and were strongly contested, and received some amendments, though none of a material nature. Lord Stormont, (afterwards Earl of Mansfield), and Lord Loughborough, (now Earl of Roselyn), were the most forward on the part of opposition. Lord Camden spoke very strongly in favour of the measure, as appearing to him, after the most comprehensive view of the matter, salutary and political, and which would be productive of many valuable benefits to the empire at large. His lordship spoke strongly in support of the protecting superiority of Great Britain, which must ever necessarily attend her situation in relation to Ireland. In the course of the business, Lord Shelburne, who had been recently created Marquis of Lansdown, though ultimately for the propositions, said, he would not permit any party bias or political connexion to mislead his judgment: he entered into a masterly view of the whole subject, in his usual manner of treating every great political question. He differed from those, who had preceded him in their opposition to the measure; for if one-tenth of their allegations were founded in truth, Great Britain should not only shrink from the arrangement, but Ireland should tremble at the acceptance. It had been brought to a mathematical certainty, that whatever benefits Ireland received from this country, so deeply was she drawn into the vortex of our good or evil, the share she took in our subsequent misfortunes, was more than sufficient to counterbalance the precedent advantages: and he witnessed the miseries she was still suffering from the calamities of the American war.

With respect to the arrangement before the house, he said he should not enter into any discussion of the interests of Ireland, as that care more properly

“ the system will be final. The right honorable gentleman said, he must have a fund of credulity who believed all the evidence which the manufacturers had given at the bar. In like manner, I say, that he must have a fund of credulity indeed, who can believe on such premises, that the Irish will be content with this system, or that the general interests of both countries can be promoted by its establishment.”

belonged

belonged to her own parliament. He would give every indulgence to ministers, who, if they were not infatuated, would give that attention to it, which a business of so much importance demanded. No man respected the manufacturers more than he did; they were sensible, enlightened, clear headed, and provident. No men were better informed on all the subjects, with which their trade was connected, than that body; and ministers must always find it their interest to consult with them, and to take their advice. But the manufacturers were men with prejudices, subject to err, particularly where they were blinded by personal interest.

The Chamber of Manufacturers he considered as an institution, which might be productive of much good, and give a partial assistance to ministers: though he confessed he was an enemy to people assembling, and giving to themselves what names they pleased; publishing manifestoes, edicts, and he knew not what to call their papers. Some noble lords seemed to apprehend, that Ireland having an unlimited trade, would soon be able to beat England out of the foreign markets; but a country without a capital could not be a rival, and capital was required to carry on both the carrying trade and the depôt trade. It had been said, a stipulation to receive Irish linens duty free for ever, and continue the duties on foreign linens, might be attended with bad consequences in a future negotiation with some foreign powers; but he would never believe, that any foreign power would act so improperly, or so indecently, as to take offence at privileges bestowed on fellow-subjects of one common sovereign. He laughed to scorn all such impotent menaces or apprehensions: there was not a power in Europe whom a look from this country would not deter, or suddenly bring back from any resolution that they might hastily give into from pique. The material distinction between this country and the powers on the continent, was: they all must sacrifice their commercial to their political interests; whereas, such were the peculiar circumstances, and such the good fortune of England, that she could at all times make her political yield to her commercial interests. The objection that was made to the system on account of its finality, was with him its praise: the fundamental principles he hoped would be established on the most permanent footing: but these did not comprehend the detail of the system. Let the two nations understand one another in the first place; let them fairly meet on fundamental principles; and having acquired mutual confidence in each other by the faithful settlement of the foundation, all the subsequent considerations might

be easily and gradually discussed and determined: then these countervailing duties, which all sides acknowledged to be of difficult adjustment, but which nobody would assert to be impracticable, might be regularly settled at the discretion of the two parliaments; and they might always be adjusted to the circumstances of the times, and be changed as occasions and necessities might require.

When noble lords objected to the system's being final, because it might prevent an union between the two kingdoms, did they for a moment consider the practicability of an union? There were several circumstances, that distinguished the cases of union with Ireland from that of Scotland. He mentioned some few, but there were many obstacles, which lay in the way of an union. Before an union was talked of, ministers should know the temper of the people of Ireland. High minded and jealous of their liberties, ministers must first learn whether the Irish nation would consent to give up their distinct empire, their parliament, and all the honours, which belonged to their own royalty and state. Apprehensions had been conceived, that the three thousand men, that Ireland lent annually to England, and paid out of her own exchequer, might be recalled and disbanded; it should rather be reflected with satisfaction, that instead of three thousand, Ireland might now, whenever the exigencies of England should require it, send out her whole military establishment, being herself secure from hostile invasion, through the numbers, discipline, and spirit of her volunteer army: Ireland was in little danger of becoming an object of a descent in any future war; for she had convinced all Europe, that she was able, with her volunteer forces only, to repel the attack of the most powerful nation in Europe. No people in the world had a more animated generosity, or effusion of heart, than Ireland; this had ever been their national character and their pride; nothing would be lost by trusting to it; and if Ireland had ever done wrong, it had been for the want of a good leading, or by the misleading of England. Here alone had been the grievance, and not with the generous Irish.

To let things remain as they were, would, of all expedients, be the most dangerous. We had raised the hopes of the Irish nation; they were on the rack of expectation; and they had minds too sanguine to remain long on the stretch, and relax ungratified into patience and submission. Something must be done respecting the general question of an adjustment, and the corner stone of connexion be laid in that moment. That in the interval of a summer vaca-
tion,

tion, many events and storms might happen to wash it away, if it were not solidly and deeply laid; and that if there were not now a beginning, it might be doubtful, when we might ever again have a chance to see the beginning take place. While peace lasted, we should avail ourselves of the opportunity, and form a plan while in a state of quiet, which might grow habitual before we came again into a state of trouble and distress.

On the 18th of July, Earl Fitzwilliam observed, that he had heard it argued, that the adjustment then going forward, was necessary, on the authority of a resolution, that had passed that house in the year 1782, which laid it down, that a permanent ground of connexion ought to be established between Great Britain and Ireland: that resolution, he contended, did not extend to, or comprehend any idea whatsoever of a commercial nature, but was solely confined to political objects, and that opinion he would by no means relinquish, unless the minister, who had brought it forward, were ready to stand up and declare, that his object in proposing it, was one that related to commerce. That necessity had also been attempted to be proved, from the riots and discontents among the manufacturers of Dublin; but that he by no means admitted as a sufficient reason for the concessions granted by the present arrangement, looking upon it as he did, to proceed from that licentiousness, with which Captain Brooke had described those persons to be infected. The demands, which that mob had made, were for protecting duties, which their parliament had very wisely, and he was sorry to say, with more fortitude than had been shewn by the minister of England, refused to gratify them with, knowing that such a measure was by no means necessary. Since then these clamours of a mob had been received as dictates by a British minister; why did he exceed them in his acquiescence? and why did he, in compliance with a demand of protecting duties, introduce a system, that overturned the whole policy of the navigation and trade of Great Britain? for he would again repeat what he had said before, that the universality of the plan then proposed, was a proof of the indiscriminating weakness of those, from whom it originated; who, in despair of discovering the proper objects, which the arrangement ought to embrace, had widely and wantonly extended it to all. But other reasons besides the want of protecting duties, might be assigned for the prevalent discontents in Ireland, (reasons by no means connected with commerce, but wholly relating to constitutional considerations,) which were the violent and oppressive measures pursued in that country by attachment, to restrain public

meetings of the people for the purpose of deliberating on great national questions, a thing which they were indisputably entitled to do, especially at the very time that a circular letter was sent about this kingdom under the sanction of the minister, and signed by a gentleman of some consideration, (the Rev. Mr. Wyvill) inviting the people to conventions and associations of a similar nature, and for the same purposes as those, which were the objects of such intemperate persecution in Ireland.

Lord Townshend, whose government of Ireland for nearly five years, supereminently qualified him to speak favorably of that country, on this occasion supported ultimately the propositions, though he interlarded his speech with some home truths, eminently illustrative of the critical situation of that country, under the then existing circumstances. When he returned from his majesty's government in that kingdom in 1772, he had the honour to tell their lordships in that house, that if they did not bring that unfortunate contest with America to a short issue, there was another part of the empire, which had long laboured under our burdens and wars, which would expect from our justice at least, as much indulgence as others might acquire by their revolt. He remembered he was deemed what was called a croaker, nay worse, a croaker of treason; but the views, interests and passions of mankind, were generally the same; and when neither senators nor ministers would make them a part of their calculations, but endeavour to quadrate what they wanted by what they wished, they would ever find themselves the dupes of their own calculation. He wished that many of their lordships had deigned to have visited the remote provinces of our sister kingdom; there they would have seen a hardy, innocent, oppressed race of men, in a rich soil, surrounded by numberless flocks and herds, yet unclothed, unfed, and mostly unhoused, owing to our restrictions upon their imports and exports, yet contributing their persons and their labours to the support of the empire: would their lordships wish to continue so large a part of their fellow-subjects in that state of subordination and misery? The fact was, that our manufacturers had informed Ireland of more than she knew before; that if we did not grant them a fair participation of our commerce, they would have it without it. If any one were wild enough to think we could coerce them, he neither knew the geographical situation of Ireland, nor the character of its inhabitants. His lordship wished to say no more on this subject, than that an opulent and luxurious country, like an individual of the same character, might lose much by such a conflict,

conflict; a poor country, like a poor individual, especially if robust and desperate, would suffer less, perhaps could scarcely be worse than they were. It had been urged by many, what necessity was there for such a measure at that time? The parliament of Ireland said, they had expressed twice the warmest satisfaction and perfect contentment at his majesty's gracious indulgences to that kingdom; that the volunteers were dwindling, and that the force of government was never stronger there, or had ever been more exerted to the suppression of rebellion and tumults than at that period. He must, he declared, ever honour the national spirit of the volunteers of that kingdom, in spite of all the discountenance, discouragements, and expedients, with which government attempted to depress them. They had given an illustrious example of what a brave and animated people could effect in their own defence. Yet he did not carry his admiration so far as to approve their assembling under the nose of parliament, to prescribe, reform, and dictate to their representatives; there was much palliation to be pleaded in behalf of our impassioned neighbours, especially when they recollected, what a quantity of political combustibles had been exported into that kingdom from this, and even the most chimerical propositions recommended, however unfitting her peculiar situation; on the contrary, had the same constitutional regulations been imparted to her at that period, which we had adopted and enjoyed in this kingdom, those formidable volunteers had perhaps never existed; but it seemed we were as jealous of our constitutional superiority as our commercial, and consequently had surrendered with reluctance what we should have granted with cordiality. The alterations, which had been made in the first propositions to Ireland, were certainly very considerable, and plainly proved the defects of the original plan; imperfect and perilous it certainly was, and had it passed, might have produced greater evils than, he was persuaded, it was calculated to prevent. Much reproach had been laid at the minister's door for the alterations he had made or admitted; in this his lordship rather thought him commendable in reforming his own errors, or of those who might have misled him, and for adopting better materials from his adversaries. What would not have been urged, and with justice, had he acted otherwise? Had he persisted in errors, and persevered in measures repugnant to his professed views and the interest of both countries, because they were his own—Had he maintained his own infallibility in spite of his conviction, and sacrificed the peace and welfare of both kingdoms to his own personal importance. He said, he scarcely knew
how

how to avoid mentioning, nor how to describe to its full extent, her situation for trade, the advantages of her southern ports, her command of St. George's Channel, the supplies of her sailors, and provisions in time of war, her consumption of our manufactures and imports in time of peace, the manhood, intrepidity, and perseverance of her inhabitants, aids which a voluptuous empire always required, and could not exist without. There were those he knew, who counted much upon her proximity and her divisions. She was too near, not to be most dear to us, and their lordships might believe, not so mutable, upon national points as ourselves. He spoke not to intimidate, but to inform. All he hoped most ardently was, that we might give enough to engage the affections and cordiality of our sister kingdom; not to attempt a bargain parsimonious and equivocal. He knew the generous and manly sentiments of that country were such, as would engage them to make a common cause, and admit of no future distinctions. If he had expressed any degree of preference for Ireland, he begged their lordships would impute it to the veneration he bore it, and the obligation he owed for their partiality to his failings; he was naturally, he hoped, the advocate of the oppressed and meritorious; he knew the Irish to be generous and untemperish friends, and who disdained to be behind hand in reciprocity. On the 19th of July 1785, after a long debate a division took* place in the House of Lords, when there were 84 for the resolutions, and 30 against them.

On the same day the resolutions were sent from the Lords to the Commons, where, after a very warm debate, the amendments made by the Lords were agreed to: afterwards Mr. Pitt brought in a bill† to the House of Commons founded upon them, which was read a first time on the 2d of August: and was followed up by an address to his majesty, voted by both houses of parliament, wherein they acquainted him with what they had done, and that it remained for the parliament of Ireland to judge and decide thereupon. On

* The following protest was entered on the Journals " Dissentient, because we conceive the plan contained in the report, as well from the manner, in which it has been introduced and conducted, as from the matter which it contains, to be likely to create and promote jealousy and dissatisfaction throughout the kingdom.

DERBY

PLYMOUTH

SCARBOROUGH

WENTWORTH FITZWILLIAM NORTHINGTON KEPPEL.

† In order to give the reader full information upon this important part of the modern history of Ireland, the debate on Mr. Pitt's bill is given in the Appendix No. LXXV. together with the address to the king, and his majesty's answer.

the

the 12th of August Mr. Secretary Orde moved the house for leave to bring in a bill, which was a mere transcript of that moved by the English minister. The debates on this occasion, and more especially on the side of opposition, were long and animated. Whatever had the least appearance of infringing on the legislative independency of Ireland, was marked and stigmatized in terms of the utmost indignation and contempt. The perpetual disposition of her hereditary revenue by the last proposition, the surrender of her commercial legislation by the fourth, the restraint imposed on her from trading beyond the Cape of Good Hope, and the Straights of Magellan by the ninth, were put in every point of view, in which reason and eloquence could render them impressive and convincing. On this side of the question, Mr. Grattan* and Mr. Flood were not only supported by the regular body of opposition, which amounted to more than three-score, but were also joined by all from the treasury bench, who set up any pretension to independence.

In favor of the bill it was urged by Mr. Fitzgibbon, Mr. Hutchinson and Mr. Foster, that the fourth proposition, which had excited so much jealousy and alarm, could not on any fair construction be said to take from Ireland her right of commercial legislation, any more than the acts passed in 1779 and 1782 had done before; in those Ireland had stipulated to trade with the British Colonies and settlements in such manner as Great Britain herself traded, to impose the like duties, and to adopt the same restrictions and regulations. That in the bill before them, it was proposed to trade with Great Britain on the same principle; the liberty of either complying with the conditions, or renouncing the agreement *in toto*, whenever the conditions should become obnoxious and unsatisfactory, would be left by the present bill full as much in the power of the Irish parliament, as it was by either of the foregoing acts. The difference only was, that by the former acts Ireland had subscribed to the commercial laws, which had been adopted by Great Britain for 290 years back; by the present, to such as that country should bind itself to in future; but that it would be still in the power of the Irish parliament to renounce these laws, and the whole agreement together, whenever she thought proper. On the other hand, the commercial advantages offered to Ireland by the bill were stated to be very important; the linen trade was thereby secured to her for ever, the colony trade through Ireland to Great

† The speech of Mr. Grattan is given in the Appendix No. LXXVI. not only as comprehending all that could be said upon this subject, but as a specimen of the sublimest oratory.

Britain was given her, the British markets were thrown open to Irish manufactures, and again, as these manufactures were allowed to be re-exported from Great Britain, with a drawback of all duties, the Irish would, in effect, export on the foundation of British capital, at the same time, that they were left to employ their own capital in the extension of their home manufactures.

After a vehement debate, which lasted 18 hours, the house divided at nine in the morning upon the motion of Mr. Orde for leave to bring in the bill, ayes 127, Noes 108. Such a division in the first stage of the business was equivalent to a defeat: and on the Monday following (15th of August) Mr. Orde moved the first reading of the bill, and the printing it; declaring that he did not intend to make any further progress in the business during the present session. He had completed his duty respecting it. If it were revived, it must be by a motion from the public, who at the commencement of the ensuing session might take such further steps as they should think proper.

In order to preclude a motion of censure framed by Mr. Flood, the secretary then moved an adjournment; and Mr. Flood consenting, not without difficulty, to wave his motion, the adjournment was carried without a division. Public illuminations testified the joy excited by the sudden termination of this extraordinary business, which thus ended to the great disappointment of the ministry in both kingdoms.

On the 15th of August, when the bill was presented and ordered to be printed, Mr. Flood proposed the following resolution to the house:—
*“ Resolved,** That we hold ourselves bound not to enter into engagement to
 “ give

* In the early part of this debate Mr. Curran gave the following picturesque view of the last important debate. (5 Par. Deb. p. 453) He expressed the effusions of his joy upon the victory his country had obtained. He said he would support the resolution proposed by the honourable member, because he thought it necessary to declare to the people, that their rights had not been solely supported by 110 independent gentlemen, but that if eight or ten of them had been absent, then those who had countenanced the measure, would have abandoned every idea of prosecuting it further. He rejoiced that the cloud, which had loomed over them, had passed away, and he declared he had no intention to wound the feelings of the minister by triumphing in his defeat; on the contrary, he might be said to rise with some degree of self-denial, when he gave to others an opportunity of exulting in the victory. The opposition in England had thrown many impediments in the way, but he would remember with gratitude, that the opposition there had supported the liberties of Ireland. When he saw them reproaching the attacks made upon the trial by jury; when he saw them
 supporting

“ give up the sole and exclusive right of the parliament of Ireland in all cases “ whatever, as well externally as commercially and internally.” The secretary evaded it by a motion for adjournment to the 5th of September, in order to give time to print, read and digest the bill: Which was carried by a very great majority. Although Mr. Flood had consented to withdraw his resolution, the debate was kept up in a very turbulent manner for three or four hours longer. Mr. Flood said, he had never heard more mischievous and inflammatory language, or more folly than on that evening. He was called to order by Mr. Foster and Mr. Fitzgibbon, who were prominently conspicuous in favor of the propositions: between whom and the patriotic orator many severe personalities passed. When the house met, pursuant to the late adjournment on the 5th of February, Mr. Pery gave in his resignation of the chair, which he had filled for fourteen years. Mr. Foster was unanimously elected speaker in his lieu, and was on the same day presented at the bar of the Lords, and approved of by the lord lieutenant. After the return of the speaker and the Commons, to their own House, Mr. Daly observed, that the conduct of the late speaker had been highly honorable to himself, and advantageous to the nation, conferring dignity upon the house, and drawing reverence to its proceedings; it was, therefore, incumbent on the House to

supporting the legislative rights of Ireland, he could not refrain from giving them his applause. They well knew that an invasion of the liberty of Ireland would tend to an attack upon their own. The principle of liberty, thank heaven, still continued in those countries, that principle, which had stained the fields of Marathon, stood in the pass to Themnopylæ, and gave to America independence. Happy it was for Ireland, that she had recovered her rights by victory, not stained with blood, not a victory bathed in the tears of a mother, a sister or a wife, not a victory hanging over the grave of a Warren or a Montgomery, and uncertain whether to triumph in what she had gained, or to mourn over what she had lost. The bill was at an end, the cloud that had been collecting so long, and threatening to break in tempest and ruin on their heads, had passed harmless away. The siege that was drawn round the constitution was raised, and the enemy was gone *Juvat ire et Dorica castra*, and they might now go abroad without fear, and trace the dangers they had escaped; here was drawn the line of circumvallation, that cut them off for ever from the eastern world; and there the corresponding one, that inclosed them from the west. Nor, let us, said he, forget in our exultation to whom we are indebted for the deliverance. Here stood the trusty mariner (Mr. Conolly) on his old station the mast head, and gave the signal. Here (Mr. Flood) all the wisdom of the state was collected, exploring your weakness and your strength, detecting every ambuscade, and pointing to the hidden battery, that was brought to bear on the shrine of freedom. And there (Mr. Grattan) was exerting an eloquence more than human, inspiring, forming, directing, animating to the great purposes of your salvation.

attend his retreat with every mark of respect, to demonstrate in what high estimation they held integrity, wisdom and moderation, and to prove that turbulence or meannesses were not the only roads to preferment: he therefore moved, " That the thanks of this House should be given to the Right
 " Honorable Edmond Sexton Pery, for his constant and unwearied attend-
 " ance in the chair during the course of above fourteen years in three suc-
 " cessive parliaments; for the unshaken integrity and steady impartiality of
 " his conduct there, and for the indefatigable pains and uncommon abilities,
 " with which he has constantly exerted himself to promote the real interest
 " of his country, and to maintain the honor and dignity of parliament,
 " and to preserve inviolable the rights and privileges of the Commons of
 " Ireland."

Which being passed unanimously in the affirmative, he moved,

" That an humble address be presented to his Majesty, most humbly to
 " beseech his Majesty, that he would be graciously pleased to confer some
 " signal mark of favor upon the Right Honorable Edmond Sexton Pery,
 " late speaker of this House, for his great and eminent services performed to
 " that country, and the distinguished ability and integrity with which he had
 " presided in the chair of that House; and to assure his Majesty, that what-
 " ever expence his Majesty should think proper to be incurred upon that ac-
 " count, that House would make good the same to his Majesty."

Which likewise passed unanimously in the affirmative; and then Lord Headford moved that a committee should be appointed to draw up an address to his grace the lord lieutenant for his wise and prudent administration. On the next day Lord Headford reported from the committee appointed to draw up an address of thanks to his grace the lord lieutenant for his wise and prudent administration, that they had drawn up the following address.

" To his Grace Charles, Duke of Rutland, Lord Lieutenant General and
 " General Governor of Ireland, the humble address of the Knights,
 " Citizens and Burgesses, in Parliament assembled.

" MAY IT PLEASE YOUR GRACE,

" WE his majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Com-
 " mons of Ireland, in parliament assembled, beg leave humbly to express to
 " your grace, with unaffected warmth, the satisfaction which we feel in every
 " opportunity of testifying our respect for your person, and our attachment
 " to your government. We cannot reflect upon your grace's constant atten-
 " tion

tion to the happiness and welfare of this kingdom, without grateful acknowledgements to his majesty, that his majesty has been pleased to give us so acceptable a proof of his royal favor, as the continuing your grace in the government of Ireland. The generous humanity of disposition, and high sense of honor, which distinguish your grace's private character, have in conjunction with your hereditary spirit and firmness, endeared you to the nation, by their happy influence on your public conduct.

We humbly desire your grace to accept our sincere thanks for those exertions, which in consequence of our unanimous address, and in obedience to his majesty's commands, your grace employed, during the last interval between our sessions, in preparing a plan of commercial intercourse with Great Britain. We are aware that the utmost delicacy and caution are necessary for the conduct of measures, in which the rights and interest of both kingdoms are equally concerned, and must be equally regarded; and we entertain a just sense of the attention your grace has manifested to this principle, that their completion should depend upon the public satisfaction. We trust therefore, that the further consideration of this subject will be pursued with that temper, that spirit of conciliation, and that impartial attention to the general welfare of the whole empire, which alone can ensure permanency to any system, or enable the wisdom of parliament to perfect such an equal, reciprocal, and just arrangement as may unite both kingdoms for ever in interest, and preserve in each a firm confidence of mutual affection.

It is our zealous and ardent wish, that your grace may long continue the government of this kingdom, and contemplate, with growing pride and satisfaction, the successful effect of your government, in the increasing affection of a generous people, and in the progressive harmony and strength of the empire."

The address having been first read at large, and afterwards paragraph by paragraph, as the Speaker was proceeding to put the question, Mr. Grattan, who just entered the house, said, "I wish to give my assent to the address; every personal compliment to his grace the lord lieutenant. I am desirous to pay; the motion of yesterday, therefore, to thank him for his prudent, wise, and just administration, passed unanimously; but the address combining the personal merit of his grace with the political demerit of the late

“ offensive arrangement, embarrasses those who would make a personal compliment, without making a public surrender of commerce and constitution ; I say, if the address only proposed to let down administration easy, to cover their most happy defeat, and to console them a little for the most fortunate overthrow of a most unjustifiable system, I should have been silent ; but here is my objection : I fear I see in some part of that address, a train laid for the revival of the twenty propositions, and of that bill by which the right honorable gentleman proposed to carry the substance of those propositions into execution. Where the address would thank the minister for the attention paid to the satisfaction of the public, I have no objection to it, other than a want of foundation in fact. The secretary did not, in the conduct of this commercial business, pay the least attention to public satisfaction ; on the contrary, after almost every county and city in the most pointed manner, had expressed their dissatisfaction at his adjustment, he introduced his bill in their defiance ; nay, after an hundred and ten of the first men in the kingdom had opposed the leave for bringing in the bill, he entertained an intention of forcing on the measure, until he was taught to understand, that the servants of the crown would oppose it in its progress. The house was canvassed, and finding, that he would be in the minority, the right honorable gentleman declined a measure, which he found he could not carry ; and yielded, not in compliment to public satisfaction, but in certainty and shame of a public parliamentary overthrow.”

However, after a long conversation, the question for the address was carried by 130 against 13. The house then attended the lord lieutenant, who, after signifying the royal assent to several public and private bills, thus addressed the two houses of parliament.

“ MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

“ ALTHOUGH the very advanced season of the year renders it expedient to conclude the present session of parliament, I flatter myself, that the great object of adjusting a commercial intercourse with Great Britain has not in vain engaged your attention, and protracted your deliberations. You have repeatedly expressed your wishes for the attainment of an equitable settlement, and I have the satisfaction to observe, that you continue to be impressed with a true sense of its necessity and importance. You will have now the fullest leisure to pursue your consideration of the
“ subject

“ subject in private, with that dispassionate assiduity which it so eminently deserves.”

“ GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS,

“ I am to thank you, in his majesty’s name, for the liberal provision you have made for the public service, and the honorable support of his majesty’s government. In your generous contribution of supplies, you have not less consulted the dignity of his crown than the real interests of his people. The necessity of preventing the accumulation of debt cannot be too strongly enforced, and it shall be my earnest and constant endeavour to render your wise exertions for this salutary purpose effectual and permanent.

“ MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

“ I feel the truest satisfaction in observing the various beneficial laws, which have passed during this session, and the wholesome effects of your wisdom in the returning tranquillity and industry, and in the rising prosperity of the kingdom. The conduct of parliament has had its just influence, their deliberate spirit and approved attention at all times to the public welfare, has inspired the people with full confidence in the legislature, and will teach them to consider their true interests with calmness and discretion.

“ The noblest object to which I can direct my attention, and which will ever constitute the happiness and pride of my life, is the establishment of the prosperity of Ireland, by extending and securing her commerce, and by cementing and perpetuating her connexion with Great Britain. And I trust you will continually cherish this sentiment in the national mind, that the stability and strength of the empire can alone be ultimately insured by uniting the interests and objects of both kingdoms in a general and equitable system of reciprocal and common advantage.”

It is not to be supposed, that an object of so much importance, which fully occupied the attention of both legislatures for seven months, should fall under the consideration of the Irish people out of parliament, without producing a considerable sensation upon the public mind. We have occasionally adverted to the agitation of political questions by the armed bodies of associated volunteers. We have noticed the division of these associations upon certain points, and we have reflected upon the consequent decline of their influence and power upon the nation. The differences, which actually procured the dissent of Lord Charlemont from the general disposition of the
original

original volunteers to embrace their Catholic brethren in the system of parliamentary reform, were by the artful manœuvres of government rendered ancillary to the debilitation of that armed union of sentiment, which had defiance to their most rigorous exertions of power. But these dissensions hitherto were confined to Catholic indulgence and parliamentary reform. The projected propositions touched neither of these questions : and as far as they could be or were understood by the different corps, which undertook to consider them, there appears to have been but one opinion for their rejection. The people was disposed or taught to believe, that the propositions were detrimental to the interests of Ireland, and that government wished and intended to force them upon Ireland by the influence of the British cabinet. No wonder then, that the popularity of the Duke of Rutland fell in the proportionate degree, as these convictions gained ground, and every exertion of rigor, whether by attachment or undoubted legal process, infused into the popular mind a degree of venom and asperity against their governor, whom they really considered counteracting the interests of their country. The city of Dublin, the grand centre of public and private negotiation, continued during the whole course of the summer of 1785, to be a scene of tumult and disorder. No sooner had parliament risen, than the expedient of non-importation agreements was again resorted to with greater zeal than ever. These engagements spread themselves into every quarter of the kingdom : they received the sanction of several grand juries, and the merchants of the trading ports found themselves compelled to subscribe to them. The enforcing of these prohibitory compacts naturally devolved upon the lowest class of the people, and they proceeded in the execution of that function according to the usual modes of popular discipline : to keep these excesses within some bounds, the military were posted in such parts of the city, as were the most subject to tumult ; centinels were placed to prevent or give notice of the first appearance of riot, and the garrison was kept in constant readiness for action.

This untemperizing disposition in government, drew on the lord lieutenant, whose manners were in other respects peculiarly adapted to command the favor of the Irish, an unusual share of popular odium. His excellency once was received at the theatre by the performance of a piece of music, called the volunteer's march. A general uproar ensued ; the entertainments of the evening were stopped ; and it was said he narrowly escaped the personal outrage of the mob.

When

When the Duke of Rutland met the parliament, according to adjournment, on the 19th of January, 1786, it appears from the speech from the throne, that it was his wish, that the consideration of the commercial intercourse should be revived: he considered, that the national solicitude of the Irish parliament for the welfare of that kingdom would point out to them the line of conduct, which would be most conducive to the public advantage, and to that last connexion between the sister kingdom, so essential to the prosperity of both. In addressing himself to the commons, he particularly adverted to the principle, which they had so wisely established, of preventing the accumulation of the national debt, which he hoped had already appeared to them to have proved successful; and he doubted not but they would persevere in the wisdom of those measures, which in their operation promoted such beneficial effects. And, in order to smooth the way for a favorite object of government, he recommended a systematic improvement of the police, and took that occasion to call the attention of both houses to the frequent outrages, that had been committed in some parts of the kingdom. Addresses both to his majesty and the lord lieutenant were, as usual, voted and passed unanimously, though not without some severe questions and animadversions upon them by Mr. Flood and some other gentlemen of the opposition.*

As the two grand objects, which government appeared the most anxious to

* In the course of these debates Mr. Forbes alluded to the industry of government since the recess in their endeavours to reconcile the people to the commercial propositions, by pamphlets and other publications in favor of the measure. With reference to Mr. Orde's own pamphlet, he in reply gave the following account of it. He said, he hoped it would never be deemed derogatory to any man to account for his parliamentary conduct to his constituents: for himself, he had great pleasure in reflecting, that for twenty-five years he had maintained the most friendly correspondence with the city he had the honor to represent; and though when he had formed an opinion upon the full conviction of his own mind, he never would relinquish it for any man, yet he held it but right for a representative to assign his reason to his constituents, when he had the misfortune of differing from them, and if he could not persuade them to become of his opinion, at least to shew them, that he acted upon principle, and in a full belief, that he was doing right. Consonant to this rule, after the address of the Cork grand jury had been presented to him, he expressed his difference of opinion explicitly and decidedly. Complaints were made, that he had treated his constituents with disrespect, by not explaining his reasons; he felt the force of the observation, and thought himself called upon to assign his reasons. He did so in a letter to one of the magistrates, which the honorable gentleman had been pleased to dignify with the title of a pamphlet. 6 Parl. Deb. p. 12.

carry in this session were the revival or some modification of the commercial propositions, and the passing of a police bill, so was his majesty's answer to the *address of the commons immediately calculated to give countenance and support to both those measures. Pains had also been taken to exaggerate some rumours of disturbance and abuses in the country parts, which had worked so strongly upon the nerves of Mr. Ogle, that he declared in the House of Commons on the 6th of February, 1786, that he saw the utter ruin of the Protestant ascendancy in the affair of Mr. O'Connor and ten thousand other instances. This Mr. O'Connor was generally considered a madman. He pretended to be a descendant from the ancient kings of Connaught; he had lately taken it into his head to possess himself of the estates and demesnes, which his ancestors had enjoyed. For this purpose he had assembled a number of armed men, and he himself resided in a place situate amongst bogs and fastnesses, where he had a cannon placed at his door, by the firing of which he assembled the mob of the country for many miles around. He had attempted to dispossess several persons of their lands, particularly a Mr. Bourke, of Ballydogan. In the last month he went to the lands of that gentleman, and made a formal entry, at the same time telling the hind, who had the care of the cattle, that if his master did not, before the 16th of February, send him a certain sum of money, he would carry his cattle away, where they should never be found.

The solicitor general, on Mr. Ogle's statement to the committee, informed them how far government had interfered in that business of Mr. O'Connor:

* 12 Com. Journ. p. 35.

“ GEORGE R.

“ His majesty thanks his faithful commons for their loyal and dutiful address, and receives with pleasure their professions of attachment to his person, family, and government.

“ The House of Commons may depend upon his majesty's warmest concurrence and support in all the great and important objects of their deliberations, and that he will be always ready to co-operate with them in any measures tending to strengthen that lasting connexion between the two kingdoms, so essentially necessary to the prosperity and happiness of all his majesty's subjects.

“ His majesty observes, with much satisfaction, their design of attending to regulations for the improvement of the credit, agriculture, and manufactures of the kingdom, as well as to the security of public and private property, and the protection of society; and agrees with them, that the encouragement of industry, and the improvement of the education and morals of his people, are among the first objects worthy of the care and attention of the House of Commons of Ireland.

G. R.”

they

they had not been inattentive to the information received of that gentleman's proceedings, but had applied to him and his colleague (the attorney general), in order to know how far they were warranted in employing an armed force to suppress him. They had returned their answer, that consistent with law and constitution, government was not warranted, until after due process the magistrates of the county should have reported, that the power of the county was insufficient. The magistrates, he said, were in a state of torpor; nothing more had been done by them, than receiving information, which information went to shew, that Mr. O'Connor had dispossessed several persons of their lands; however, the law officers could not advise the taking possession with a military force, until after due course of law. He concluded with thanking his right honorable friend, whose honest zeal for the Protestant interest of Ireland had given government an opportunity of explaining their conduct in that business.

Mr. Conolly and some other gentlemen of great landed property in the country, who had been much in the habit of supporting government, now appeared to have taken a decided part in the opposition to the Duke of Rutland's administration. On this same day the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir John Parnell) moved, that the debt of the nation was 3,044,167*l.*; on which Mr. Conolly observed, that the expences of government every year increased: that the minister came regularly to that house to complain of the deficiency in the revenue, and demanded a loan, which was granted on his promise of future œconomy: at last the revenue was raised by new taxes to equal the expence, and still the expence had increased: he (as also Mr. Grattan) insisted upon the necessity of making a stand against the growth of expence, or else their constitution and commerce were at an end. Accordingly, on the 9th of February, Mr. Conolly moved the following resolutions: 1°. That the house did in the last session grant certain new taxes, estimated at 140,000*l.* per ann. for the purpose of putting an end to the accumulation of debt. 2°. That should the said taxes be continued, it was absolutely necessary, that the expences of the nation should be confined to her annual income. After a very warm and long debate, there appeared upon a division 73 for Mr. Conolly's resolutions, and 149 against them.

In the course of this debate the gentlemen of the opposition were frequently and loudly called upon for their confidence in the government, which

they indignantly disclaimed.* The grand attack which the patriots made on the treasury bench this session, was upon the pension list.

Mr. Forbes led the van on the attack, and on the 6th of March moved the house, after a very animated speech, that the present application and amount of pensions on the civil establishment, were a grievance to the nation, and demanded redress. The motion produced a very interesting debate; but it shared the same fate as the bill he afterwards introduced to limit the amount of pensions, which was lost by a majority of 134 against 78. This bill was most strenuously opposed by Sir Hercules Langrishe, Mr. Mason, Mr. George Ponsonby, the attorney-general, and the most leading men on the treasury bench, as a direct and indecent invasion of the royal prerogative. The attorney-general asserted, that the principle of the bill went to the most dangerous extent of any bill that had ever come before parliament; it went to rob the crown of its responsibility in the disposal of the public money, and to convey it to that house, and even to the House of Peers. He then begged leave to remind the members of what happened after the passing of their fa-

* Upon this subject Mr. Grattan exclaimed (6 Parl. Debates, p. 119) " Who would have imagined to have seen in the course of this debate, that faded cockade of the Castle, confidence, advanced on the side of the court, confidence in the Irish minister in the uncontrolled expenditure of Irish money. What, after all your experience, to prefer confidence to this resolution, requires, in my opinion, a most robust conscience, and a most infirm understanding. Desirous as we all are to pay every respect, and with every predilection in favor of our present viceroy, a young man of a very noble unsuspicious nature, exposed perhaps too much to importunity, yet who can answer for his continuance? This confidence then must extend to all his successors, whoever they may be, of whatever cast, party, principle, or capacity. But even that won't do. This confidence must extend to all the secretaries of all the future lords lieutenants. In the last seven years we had seven lord-lieutenants and eight secretaries. The confidence must then be extended to the lords and commons of Great Britain, or rather to the king's commission, on a pure and perfect persuasion that whom the king shall appoint, the Lord illuminates; and where the purse is bestowed, there is the virtue and there is the œconomy. This will not do; it is not sufficient that viceroys should be gods—Irishmen must be angels, and importunity and solicitation cease; and in that event I submit to the force of the argument of confidence, as something not according to reason, but above it."

In the flight of that great orator's imagination, he has left us the following picture of the nation's expence. (6 Parl. Debates, p. 153) " See the chart of your credit, an evanescent speck just rising above the plane of the horizon, and then it drops; while your debt ascends like a pyramid, with an audacious defalcation, and almost culminates in your meridian. Midway of this mountain of debt, you will discern a line marking your effort to put an end to the practice of running in debt."

vorite

vorite vote of 1757. The members of that house caballed together, forming themselves into little parties, and voting to each other hundreds of thousands. And as no government could go on without the aid of their leaders, it cost that nation more to break through that *puisné* aristocracy, which had made a property of parliament, than what it would by the pension list for many years.* On the side of the patriots, all the old arguments were urged with redoubled force against the pension list. Mr. Grattan gave great offence by the strong and harsh assertion, with which he closed his speech on Mr. Forbes's motion, viz. *If he should vote that pensions were not a grievance, he should vote an impudent, an insolent, and a public lie.*†

* 6 Parl. Debates, p. 290. This is a sort of official evidence, if any were wanting, to prove the existence of the system of individual venality, which has been stated to have been established under the administration of Lord Townshend. Sir Hercules Langrish exerted his powers on this occasion in an extraordinary manner, inasmuch, that Mr. George Ponsonby said of him, that he had never heard a series of better arguments, interspersed and enlivened with more brilliant strokes of wit, than the speech of the honorable baronet against that bill. Mr. George Ponsonby was so attached to the government of the Duke of Rutland, that one of his principal arguments against the pension bill, was, that it would convey censure upon his Grace's administration, which he did not deserve.

† Amongst the patriots, Mr. Curran shone conspicuous in support of the pension bill. (6 Parl. Debates, p. 282) This polyglot of wealth, said he, this museum of curiosities, the pension list, embraces every link in the human chain; every description of men, women, and children, from the exalted excellence of a Hawke or Rodney, to the debased situation of the lady who humbly herself that she may be exalted. But the lessons it inculcates form its greatest perfection; it teaches that sloth and vice may eat that bread, which virtue and honesty may starve for after they had earned it. It teaches the idle and dissolute to look up for that support, which they are too proud to stoop to earn. It directs the minds of men to an entire reliance on the ruling power of the state, who feeds the ravens of the royal aviary, that cry continually for food. It teaches them to imitate those saints on the pension list, that are like the lillies of the field, they toil not, neither do they spin, and yet are arrayed like Solomon in all his glory. In fine, it teaches a lesson, which indeed they might have learned from Epictetus, that it is sometimes good not to be over-virtuous: it shews, that in proportion as our distresses increase, the munificence of the crown increases also; in proportion as our clothes are rent, the royal mantle is extended over us.

On the same day Mr. Grattan exclaimed, when gentlemen say that the new charge for pensions is small, let me assure them they need not be alarmed; the charge will be much greater; for unless your interposition should deter, what else is there to check it? Will public poverty? no: new taxes? no: gratitude for those taxes? no: principle? no: profession? no: the love of fame, or sense of infamy? no. Confined to no one description of merit, or want of character, under the authority of that list, every man, woman, and child in Ireland, have pretensions to become a public incumbrance; so that since government went so far, I marvel that they have stopped, unless the pen fell out of their hand from fatigue, for it could not be from principle.

The remaining subject of difference between the ministry and the patriots in that session, was upon the police bill, which had been for a considerable time a favorite object with government to carry, in order to strengthen their interest in the city of Dublin, which, from the days of Dr. Lucas, they had felt declining, in the independence, which he had laboured so strenuously and successfully to establish. It was conceived by the opposition, that if the bill were carried for the city of Dublin, it would in the next session be extended to every part of the kingdom: and it was also generally considered, that the report of popular risings and popish conspiracies against the Protestant ascendancy, had been industriously exaggerated for the purpose of intimidating the parliament into the adoption of that strong measure* of government.

Mr.

No, sir, this list will go on; it will go on till the merchant shall feel it, until the manufacturer shall feel it, until the pension list shall take into its own hand the keys of taxation; and instead of taxing licence to sell, shall tax the article and manufacture itself; until we shall lose our great commercial resource, a comparative exemption from taxes, the gift of our poverty, and get an accumulation of taxes, to be the companion of our poverty; until public indignation shall cry shame upon us, and the morality of a serious and offended community shall call out for the interposition of law.

* Sir Edward Crofton, in opposing this bill, said, " I have spoken of Mr. O'Connor in a former debate; and I am firmly persuaded that, as to that gentleman, matters have been extremely exaggerated and misrepresented. I know it has been mentioned as an affair, that required the interference of government; and that camps, cannon, and fortifications, were erected. It was also rumoured, that the Roman Catholics were in open rebellion; this was an insidious, infamous, and false report, calculated to cast an undeserved reflection on a body of men remarkable for their loyalty to their sovereign, and their known attachment to the constitution; it was an illiberal and an infamous attack on a people distinguished for their peaceable demeanor, and was intended but to serve the purposes of this still more infamous bill.

" However great my knowledge may have been of the loyalty of the Roman Catholics of this country, yet I must confess, on this occasion, I was made a dupe to report; for, from the gentleman, who had declared the county of Roscommon to be in a state of rebellion, I could scarcely believe but government had authority for saying so; I confess, therefore, I felt for my property; and it was natural I should make every possible enquiry; I did so, and found there was no rebellion in the country; and also found the trifling disturbances, which have been so exaggerated, were only the effects of some whiskey, to which the country people had been treated, and which every gentleman knows operates on the lower order of people, as oil of rodim does on rats; and what was very extraordinary, there was not a broken head on the occasion.

" I wrote to a gentleman of veracity, and a magistrate, (a Mr. Caulfield) who assured me, the peace of the county was not for a moment disturbed: I offered to re-instate those gentlemen who were said to be dispossessed of their lands, with the assistance of a troop of dragoons; the power
" was.

Mr. Conolly took a leading part in opposing the police bill, which he observed, under the specious pretence of giving police, went to take away constitution. He was still positive, that he was well-founded in his opinion; that the conduct of the administration was inimical to the constitution. The temperance of the volunteers since the noble duke's administration, deserved their grateful approbation. When they were misguided, and adopted measures, which he conceived improper, he was not backward in avowing himself against their proceedings; but when he reflected, that the moment the volunteers were told their conduct was disagreeable to parliament, they retired to the country without a murmur, such conduct secured his admiration, and made him tenacious of their liberties; nor could their arms be placed in better hands than where they were.

There were several heated debates upon this bill: it was treated by opposition as a most unconstitutional job, a mere bill of patronage for ministerial purposes: although it must be allowed, that the secretary offered to alter whatever should be found objectionable in the committee, and some of the noxious clauses were withdrawn. Several petitions were presented against the bill, but received with ill grace. Amongst other petitions, one was presented by the freeholders of the county of Dublin, by Sir Edward Newnham, which the attorney-general moved to have rejected,* as an insult to the house; and it

“ was denied me; I therefore was well-founded in an opinion, that when this bill was mentioned, the affair of Roscommon would be made a handle of, and that it would be said, the rebellion, as it was ludicrously termed, of O'Connor, made it absolutely necessary. I am also convinced, that the affairs in the south are likewise exaggerated, and by no means fairly stated, so as to give rise to this measure.” 6 Parl. Debates, p. 338.

* The temper of the house will be better seen by considering the petition which met with this severe fate. (6 Parl. Debates, p. 388).

A petition of the freeholders of the county of Dublin, signed by the sheriff of the said county, was presented to the house and read, setting forth that the petitioners, deeply interested in the welfare of this country, the metropolis thereof, and the kingdom of Ireland at large, and anxiously solicitous for the honor and dignity of parliament, have, with the most sincere concern, observed a bill, intitled, “ a bill for the better execution of the law within the city of Dublin, and certain parts adjacent thereto, and for quieting and protecting possessions within this kingdom, for the more expeditious transportation of felons; for the reviving, continuing, and amending certain statutes therein mentioned, and for repealing an act passed in the 17th and 18th years of the police of the city of Dublin,” involving the chartered rights of the ancient and respectable corporation of the city of Dublin, the liberties, properties, and domestic enjoyments of the inhabitants of

it was rejected by 118 against Sir Edward Newnham and Colonel Sharman. The attorney-general boasted of his indulgence in not moving a censure against the petitioners: but should not again be so gentle, if the offence were repeated. This was the most important bill passed during the session. Several gentlemen on the treasury bench wished to bring in a bill for securing the persons, houses and properties of vicars, rectors, and curates, actually resident within their respective parishes; the introduction of which bill gave to several members an opportunity of giving vent to the feelings either of zeal for the hierarchy, or indignation against those, who were not of the establishment. But as the attorney-general considered them as effectually secured by the law, as other subjects, the bill was reluctantly dropped. On the 8th of May, 1786, the parliament was prorogued; when his grace the lord-lieutenant, in his speech, assured them, that the determined spirit, with which they had marked their abhorrence of all lawless disorders and tumults, had already made an useful impression; and the salutary laws enacted in that session, and particularly the introduction of a system of police, were honorable proofs of their wisdom, moderation, and prudence. He moreover assured them, that his ma-

of the capital and its environs, precipitating through the House of Commons, at a time when a considerable number of members were unavoidably engaged in the business of the assizes, and therefore could not have had an opportunity of being consulted upon a subject of such magnitude; that the petitioners conceive that a certain class of men, who, from their character and conduct have never been considered as objects of responsibility, under the absolute control of certain commissioners nominated by the minister, with powers arbitrary and despotic, may, to gratify their own licentious dispositions, force themselves into the peaceful retreats of our families, and, under the pretence of protecting us from the depredations of others, commit the most indecent and cruel irregularities, that the debtor, to whom the law has afforded in his house a sanctuary, cannot be secure; and the infirm and invalid, let their situation be ever so deplorable, cannot be at rest; our wives, children, and friends, will find their domestic enjoyment cease, the ultimate wish of life, retirement, done away; that the petitioners are of opinion, that the powers granted by the bill to the commissioners, of raising bodies of armed men, although limited in number, together with that of levying money to support the same, are dangerous expedients, and directly militate against the principles of the constitution; that the petitioners perceive with sorrow a certain and numerous body of their fellow-subjects obliged to submit to an ignominious distinction, and marked suspicion, by a partial registry of their names, occupations, and abodes, which regulation from any matter that has been set forth in the bill, or we can devise, we cannot but consider as oppressive and unnecessary: that the petitioners consider the clause, which includes that part of the county of Dublin within the circular road in the district of the metropolis, as highly oppressive upon the inhabitants of the county of Dublin residing therein, as it subjects them to a two-fold taxation; and therefore praying to be heard by themselves, or their counsel, at the bar of the house against the said bill.

justify

jeſty beheld with the higheſt ſatisfaction the zeal and loyalty of the people of Ireland : and that he had his majeſty's expreſs commands, to aſſure them of the moſt cordial returns of his royal favor and parental affection.

When the parliament met according to the laſt adjournment, on the 18th of January, 1787, the lord lieutenant particularly applied to them for their aſſiſtance, in the effectual vindication of the laws and the protection of ſociety : and reminded them, that their uniform regard for the rights of their fellow ſubjects, and their zealous attachment to the religious and civil conſtitution of their country, would ſtimulate their attention to their inſeparable intereſts, and would ensure their ſpecial ſupport of the eſtabliſhed church and the reſpectable ſituation of its miniſters. He alſo informed them, that he had ordered a copy of the treaty of commerce with the French king to be laid before them, and he hoped, that the adoption of it in Ireland, by ſuch laws as would be requiſite to give it effect, would be attended with the moſt beneficial conſequences to the country. Theſe objects of recommendation formed the bulk of the buſineſs of the ſeſſion.

Mr. Conolly made ſome obſervations upon that part of the addreſs, which alluded to the diſturbances in the ſouth : he could by no means admit, that they were as extenſive as repreſented by government. He wiſhed not to make any reflection upon the worthy chief governor, whom, he ſaid, he knew to be an honeſt man and the friend of both countries : he did not ſuſpect him, but the adminiſtration : and againſt them he made the moſt ſerious, and at the ſame time the moſt important charge, that could be laid at the door of the moſt wicked adminiſtration. It is the more neceſſary to advert to the nature of this charge, as it has been almoſt uniformly objected from this time forwards to the meaſures of every adminiſtration, down to the cloſe of the union, but with what juſtice, ſubſequent events will diſcloſe. A charge of ſuch intense malevolence, and of ſuch incalculable miſchief, ought not to be even imagined without the ſtrongeſt preſumptions and grounds.*

Mr.

* 7 Par. Deb. p. 21. Suppoſing, ſaid Mr. Conolly, that theſe diſturbances are as extenſive as have been repreſented, but I hope in God they are not—ſuppoſing they are as formidable as government have repreſented them in their proclamations, are not the laws at preſent in being ſufficient to reſtore order ? They are abundantly ſo, if properly enforced. And hence, Sir, my ſuſpicion is excited, when I behold adminiſtration attempting by inſinuation, to eſtabliſh the neceſſity of new laws for unneceſſary purpoſes, or for ſomething worſe. I am convinced that had adminiſtration been active,

Mr. Conolly adverted to the proclamations that had been issued, stating, that the greatest meetings ever known had been convened in the south; and that they were all in arms. Why then did not government suppress them in their infancy? Why not punish the supineness of the magistrates, which was complained of and admitted on all hands? But he considered it as a measure to intimidate the Protestants of that kingdom, and to furnish an immediate pretext for an unconstitutional police bill. If those turbulences were not exaggerated, government was highly censurable for not having prevented them in time: if they were so, they were more criminal for having created ill-founded alarms. Mr. Longfield, who lived near Cloyne in the county of Cork, wholly disclaimed the existence of such turbulence as had been represented under the desperate auspices of a Captain *Right*, whence his followers were called *Right Boys*. He informed the house, that his demesnes bordered the town of Cloyne: that although he had heard much of these disturbances last session, he had observed nothing of them in the course of the summer: the bishop of that diocese had not applied for any military assistance, but lived quietly secure at home, in the protection of the neighbouring gentlemen. The first thing that could be called a disturbance, induced him to think government had a hand in it. Some very respectable people of Cloyne came to him, and told him that a bailiff belonging to the high sheriff had been sent amongst them, with notices to provide a quantity of arms and ammunition, and a number of horses, by the following Sunday, for the use of Captain *Right*. It appeared odd, that a sheriff's bailiff should be employed on such a business, and, as a magistrate, he sent for him. He confessed the fact of having served the notices, and said he was employed by Captain *Right*. He was desired to give information against Captain *Right*, which he refused; upon which the honorable member committed him to goal, returned the bills against him, and brought persons of

tive, they might have checked these disturbances in embryo. I will ask can any man entertain a doubt of it? and when they did not, what can we infer from it, but that there was some dark design in suffering them to come to maturity?

And why do I suspect administration? Because of their conduct on the propositions; when they wished to prove, and to have us believe, that the returned propositions were identically the same as the original ten, and were ready to pass them with the same alacrity and vigour, although every man in the nation was convinced, that they coerced the commerce, and invaded the constitution of this kingdom.

credit,

credit, who had sworn examinations, and were ready to prosecute: but to his astonishment, the grand jury threw out the bills. Mr. Kemmis, the crown solicitor said, he could do nothing without an order from government, and as he was not in the habit of asking favors from government, there the matter dropped.

This was the first disturbance he had heard of; the next was that Captain Right swore some of the people in his neighbourhood to observe his regulations; yet another gentleman and he, attended by a single servant, had made this formidable Captain Right a prisoner, and safely lodged him in gaol. Such being the case, there ought not to be a general charge of delinquency against the county of Cork, because some of its magistrates were supine. After what he mentioned, government sent forces down to that part of the country; two of their officers were Englishmen, one a Scotchman; the people could not be supposed to have any very great partiality for them, or they for the people, yet they lived unmolested in good quarters, and never had occasion to be called out to quell any disturbance.

A nobleman of great talents, knowledge, experience and sagacity, had the chief command of the troops sent into the province of Munster. If they had his report, were there any way of coming at it, it would shew that none but the lowest wretches, who groaned under the most intolerable oppressions, were engaged in any disturbance. If that noble lord were present, he would make them shudder at the account of the miseries of that wretched people.

Sir James Cotter said, he came very lately from that county, and to his knowledge, great disturbances did exist, and his report was confirmed by Mr. Warren. He had often been an eye witness to the violences of the deluded people. The honorable gentleman (Mr. Longfield) who had a great estate, and lived in the midst of his tenants, with a number of servants and dependants about him, might feel no apprehension; but he, who had but a small fortune and few servants, had not, he said, for nine months last past gone to bed a single night that he was sure of rising in the morning with his life. He then related to the house an account of his having once been fired at by the insurgents, and of his being stopped by a number of armed men, who, as a very great favor, suffered him to depart unhurt.

Mr. Curran observed, that had this address been, as all addresses that he had ever read or heard of were, composed of unmeaning stuff, he should not

now rise to speak to it. But it was an address, that tended to inspire the mind of the chief governor with indignation for the wretched people of that country ; an address tending to impress the father of his people with the idea of their being in open revolt, to divert the royal mind from listening to the complaints of afflicted subjects, or alleviating their miseries ; it was a gross invective. To say it was necessary, was adding irony to invective.

The people were oppressed, and before they poured the last drop into the vessel, and caused the waters of bitterness to overflow on them, they should well consider if the representatives of the nation had been remiss, if the magistrates throughout the kingdom had criminally been supine ; let them lay the blame at the right door ; cease to utter idle complaints of inevitable effects, when they themselves have been the causes. The man who would say, that the constitution in church and state was in danger, from the simple insurrection of a parcel of peasants, without order, without a head, without a leader, undisciplined, unarmed, or only partially so, he would not take to be a very wise man ; and the man who would say so from any thing, save an error in judgment, he would not take to be either a wise or an honest man.

Is it any wonder, said he, that the wretches whom woeful and long experience has taught to doubt, and with justice to doubt, the attention and relief of the legislature, wretches, that have the utmost difficulty to keep life and soul together, and who must inevitably perish, if the hand of assistance were not stretched out to them, should appear in tumult ? No, Sir, it is not. Unbound to the sovereign by any proof of his affection, unbound to government by any instance of its protection, unbound to the country, or to the soil, by being destitute of any property in it, 'tis no wonder that the peasantry should be ripe for rebellion and revolt : so far from matter of surprize, it must naturally have been expected.

The supineness of the magistrates, and the low state of the commissions of the peace throughout the kingdom, but particularly in the county of Cork, should be rectified. A system of vile jobbing was one of the misfortunes of that country : it extended even to commissions of the peace : how else could the report of the four and twenty commissions of the peace, sent down to the county of Clare in one post be accounted for ? Even the appointment of sheriffs was notoriously in the hands of government ; and through jobbing, sheriffs themselves could not be trusted : two sheriffs ran away last
year

year with executions in their pockets, and the late high sheriff of the county of Dublin had absconded.

He concluded by moving the following amendments, viz.

“ Though it is a great consolation to us to think, that these outrages have
 “ not originated in any disaffection in your majesty’s subjects of this king-
 “ dom to your majesty’s government, or in any concerted design of disturb-
 “ ing our present happy constitution either in church or state, but have
 “ been wholly confined to some individuals of the lowest class of the peo-
 “ ple, whose extreme indigence and distress, may be the occasion, though
 “ they cannot be a justification of such illegal proceedings ; and it is a fur-
 “ ther consolation to us to know, that the ordinary powers of the law now
 “ in being are fully adequate, if duly exerted, to punish and restrain such
 “ excesses.*

“ At the same time we humbly beg leave to represent to your majesty,
 “ that the public expences of this country have encreased to a degree so far
 “ beyond the ability of the people to bear, that we feel ourselves called upon
 “ by our duty to our constituents, to reduce those expences by every mode
 “ of retrenchment, consistent with such honorable and necessary support to
 “ your majesty’s government, within such limits as may be compatible with
 “ the very exhausted resources of a distressed people ; and we do not doubt
 “ of having your majesty’s gracious approbation of a measure so essential to
 “ the commercial hopes of your kingdom of Ireland, as well as conducive to
 “ the permanent peace and prosperity of this kingdom :” but they passed in the negative.

On the 31st of January, 1787; when the house was in a committee upon that part of his excellency’s speech, which related to the commotions, which in some places disturbed the public tranquillity ; the attorney-general (Fitzgibbon) submitted to the house the following narrative of facts, which he said had come to his knowledge respecting the proceedings of the insurgents.* Their commencement was in one or two parishes in the county of Kerry, and they proceeded thus : the people assembled in a Catholic chapel, and there took an oath to obey the laws of Captain Right, and to starve the clergy. They then proceeded to the next parishes on the following Sunday, and there swore the people in the same manner, with this addition, that they (the people last sworn) should, on the ensuing Sunday, proceed to the

* 7 Par. Deb. p. 57.

chapels of their next neighbouring parishes, and swear the inhabitants of those parishes in like manner.

Proceeding in this manner they very soon went through the province of Munster. The first object of their reformation was tithes; they swore not to give more than a certain price per acre; not to take them from the minister at a great price; not to assist or allow him to be assisted in drawing the tithe, and to permit no proctor. They next took upon them to prevent the collection of parish cesses; then to nominate parish clerks, and in some cases curates; to say what church should or should not be repaired; and in one case to threaten that they would burn a new church, if the old one were not given for a mass house. At last they proceeded to regulate the price of lands, to raise the price of labour, and to oppose the collection of the hearth-money and other taxes.

In all their proceedings they shewed the greatest address, with a degree of caution and circumspection, which was the more alarming, as it demonstrated system and design. Bodies of 5000 of them have been seen to march through the country unarmed, and if met by any magistrate, who had spirit to question them, they had not offered the smallest rudeness or offence; on the contrary they had allowed persons charged with crimes, to be taken from amongst them by the magistrate alone, unaided with any force. Wherever they went, they found the people as ready to take an oath to cheat the clergy as they were to propose it; but if any one did resist, the torments which he was doomed to undergo, were too horrible even for savages to be supposed guilty of. In the middle of the night he was dragged from his bed, and buried alive in a grave lined with thorns, or he was set naked on horseback, and tied to a saddle covered with thorns: in addition to this, perhaps his ears were sawed off. There was that day an account received of two military men, who had exerted themselves in the line of their duty, being attacked by a body of Right Boys, and perhaps murdered, for there was but little hope of their recovering of their wounds. The way in which the Right Boys perpetrated that crime, was; the two men were walking together armed, they set a dog at them, when one of the men fired; he had no sooner thrown away his fire, than a multitude rushed upon the two from behind the ditches, and wounded them in a most shocking manner.

Upon the best enquiry, there was not the least ground to accuse the clergy of extortion. Far from receiving the tenth, he knew of no instance, in which

which they received the twentieth part. He was well acquainted with the province of Munster, and that it was impossible for human wretchedness to exceed that of the miserable peasantry in that province. He knew, that the unhappy tenantry were ground to powder by relentless landlords. He knew that, far from being able to give the clergy their just dues, they had not food or raiment for themselves; the landlord grasped the whole, and sorry was he to add, that not satisfied with the present extortion, some landlords had been so base as to instigate the insurgents to rob the clergy of their titles, not in order to alleviate the distresses of the tenantry, but that they might add the clergy's share to the cruel rack-rents already paid. It would require the utmost ability of parliament to come to the root of those evils. The poor people of Munster lived in a more abject state of poverty than human nature could be supposed able to bear; their miseries were intolerable, but they did not originate with the clergy; nor could the legislature stand by and see them take the redress into their own hands. Nothing could be done for their benefit while the country remained in a state of anarchy.

Upon the best consideration that he had been able to give the subject, two circumstances, which had contributed to spread the commotions, required to be immediately corrected.

The first was, that under the present existing law, the kind of combination, which pervaded the province of Munster, was deemed but a misdemeanor; a bailable offence, and no magistrate could refuse to take bail for it.

The second was, the insufficiency and criminal neglect of magistrates throughout the great county of Cork; there was scarcely a magistrate that would act. In the neighbourhood of the city of Cork, indeed, one gentleman, Mr. Mannix, exerted himself, much to his own honour and the public benefit. In the west of the county, Mr. Cox also behaved with great propriety. If other magistrates had acted in the same manner these two gentlemen had, the commotions would not have existed for a month. As to the grand jury not having found the bill against the sheriff's bailiff, he shewed the impossibility of framing an indictment upon the facts, he justified the crown solicitor, and moved

“ That it is the opinion of this committee, that some further provisions
 “ by statute are indispensibly necessary to prevent tumultuous rising and as-
 “ semblies, and for the more adequate and effectual punishment of persons
 “ guilty

“ guilty of outrage, riot and illegal combination, and of administering and taking unlawful oaths.”

Some further conversation ensued, in which the attorney-general assured the house, that it was impossible for the peasantry of Munster any longer to exist in the extreme wretchedness, under which they laboured. A poor man was to pay 6*l.* for an acre of potatoe ground, which 6*l.* he was obliged to work out with his landlord at 5*d.* a day. The question was then put upon the resolution, which passed unanimously, whereupon the committee reported, and leave was given to bring in a bill, consonant to the tenor of the resolution. Several gentlemen in the opposition were very loud in declaiming against the profusion and extravagance of the government expences: complaints were successively made against the allowances to the printers of new papers for inserting proclamations and advertisements, which were detrimental to the public, and disgraceful to the nation, for the sum of 1266*l.* for repairing the road through the Phoenix Park, through which carts were not permitted to pass; for law bills for prosecuting Right Boys, for the expence of witnesses attending in London to give evidence concerning the Irish propositions, for building country houses for the officers of the crown, and other charges which were most scandalously brought against the public: they were all defended by the ministers, and of course none of the objectionable articles were disallowed.

Mr. Conolly, who at this time took a very active part in the interest of the poor, and the welfare of his country, on the 9th of February, declared in the house, that it had been his intention, in the course of that session, to move an alteration in the tax of hearth-money, for the relief of the poor distressed cottagers: as however a large portion of that description of persons in the south were in a state of resistance to the laws of their country; he declared he would defer his motion till the people should demean themselves peaceably as good subjects. Some observations upon the extreme hardship of this tax were made by Mr. Stewart, when Mr. Monk Mason said, he could not bear to hear the hearth-money spoken of as an oppressive tax: it had been paid for near a century without complaint, and he could see no reason why it was on a sudden become the fashion to exclaim against it. Such resistance from the treasury bench to the repeal of this most oppressive tax, was little calculated to ensure the affection of the lower orders of society.

Mr.

Mr. Conolly immediately afterwards called the attention of the house to a resolution, which he flattered himself would be unexceptionable to every part of it, which every gentleman who supported, or who opposed government, every honest Irishman and every honest Englishman must approve of. It was impossible, for any man to say, that running in debt could either serve Ireland or England. If in time of peace they thus continued to run in debt, what were they to do in the event of a war? * He then moved, that the house determined to put an end to the ruinous practice of running in debt, did the session before last vote new taxes estimated at 140,000*l.* per ann. and having on the same principle continued those taxes in the last session of parliament, then provided cheerfully to give and grant the same taxes in the decided expectation, that by his Grace the Lord Lieutenant's frugal and just management of the public revenues, thus greatly enlarged, they would be then rendered sufficient to satisfy the public expences, without the further accumulation of debt or increase of taxes. It passed without a dissenting voice, when Mr. Conolly immediately moved, that the house, with the speaker, should attend the Lord Lieutenant with a copy of the resolution; but the Chancellor of the Exchequer opposed this second motion as an indecent parade, and an intended censure on the chief governor; the motion was withdrawn, and Mr. Conolly was complimented thereupon by the secretary, who was sure, that the right honorable member always meant right.

The bill for preventing tumultuous risings and assemblies, and for the more effectual punishment of persons guilty of outrage, riot and illegal combination, and of administering and taking unlawful oaths, was introduced by the attorney general, and was opposed in every stage by the patriots, who contended, that the existing laws were fully adequate to correct, punish and prevent the abuses, if properly carried into execution: that to punish a whole nation by imposing upon them the most severe and unconstitutional laws, on account of the misconduct of a small part was unjust: that this act went infinitely beyond the English riot act: and would be productive of more discontent and confusion, than then unfortunately existed in that country. They

* With circumstances, political opinions often change. Mr. Conolly, who was one of the staunchest supporters of the union, on this occasion, so far avowed anti-unionism as the basis of his political creed, as to have volunteered this strong assertion: "*I wish to have it in our power to assist England. No man would do more for England than I would. I would do any thing for her short of an Union.*" 7 Par. Deb. 133.

admitted,

admitted, that the South ought to be coerced: they lamented, that the peasantry in that district should have invaded personal security and undermined their own liberties: they deplored the savage infatuation, which had prompted them to outrage, and blushed for the necessity of strong measures, to curb their lawlessness. The hands of the magistrate ought to be strengthened, though not without limitation: the magistrate should be enabled to disperse meetings, that were notoriously convened for illegal purposes: nor ought they to be admitted to bail, who should have refused to disperse: and they fully allowed, that the persons, who dug graves, provided gibbets, and indulged in such atrocities should be punished capitally. They complained, that the principal deviations * from the English riot acts, were all founded in more intense severity:

* Mr. Grattan in his speech on this occasion pointed out several of these deviations: 7 Par. Deb. 181. Another difference, from the riot act was, that in England the proclamation is obliged to be read; but by this bill, nothing more was required of the magistrate than to command the rioters to disperse in the King's name. If they did not disperse in one hour death was the consequence, and this he considered as putting an hour-glass in the hand of time, to run a race against the lives of the people; and this was certainly a great objection. Another objection was, that if a magistrate was stopped, when repairing to the place of riot, the person who stopped him, would be guilty of felony; that was, though the magistrate was resorting to an unlawful place, the person who obstructed him, should be deemed to merit death. And if the persons did not disperse, if the magistrate was interrupted, the reckoning of time was to commence from the moment of his obstruction: and should they continue one hour they would be guilty of felony, and incur the punishment of death; that is, the interception of a magistrate, at a distance in this kingdom, was to be tantamount to the reading of a proclamation on the spot in England. This he thought one of the severest clauses that was ever brought forward, or ever adopted. But even though this had been premised of the English riot act, the measure of their severity should not be a measure for the legislation of the houses, if it should, it would be bad in principle, and worse in practice. Another clause of the bill made it felony to write, print, publish, send, or carry any message, letter, or notice, tending to excite insurrection, that is, that a man who shall write or print any letter or notice, shall be guilty—of what?—of felony! Like the Draconian laws, this bill had blood! blood! felony! felony! felony! in every period, and in every sentence. Now had this bill been law for some time past, what would be the situation of every man, who printed a newspaper for nine months past? What would be the situation of every man who had written upon the subject of tithes! For as the right of the clergy to tithes is acknowledged to be founded in law, and as the papers and writers have argued against them, what would be the consequence? Who could tell how their conduct might be construed in a court of law? or whether they might not be adjudged guilty of felony? But he would not ask who would be guilty under such a law; but he would ask, who would not be guilty? A perpetual mutiny bill had been once the law of the land, and yet gentlemen both spoke and wrote against it as dangerous, unconstitutional, and beyond the power of parliament to sanction. Had this bill been then

verity: perpetuity was also another objection to the bill: and it was strongly urged, that this extreme rigour was not to be handed down to posterity as an inheritance: nor were the provinces of Ulster, Leinster and Connaught to be punished for their tranquillity in the same manner as Munster was for its turbulence: neither should such overstretched severity descend from the fathers to their children, as a kind of original sin, and death and felony be spread in every quarter through the land: should the bill in its then form pass, it would become ineffectual from its excessive rigor: it would be the triumph of the criminal and the stigma of the laws. The attorney general supported the deviations from the English riot act: but abandoned the clause directing

then law, they would have all been guilty of felony, and suffered death. Who could tell in what manner the words, *tending to excite disturbance* might be interpreted? The clause, respecting the taking of arms, and ammunition, or money to purchase them, he observed, to bear a similarity to the white boy act; but the white boy act was more guarded. He then looked to the clause, that respected the profaning places of public worship, and was remarkably pointed and severe upon it. He considered it as casting a stain of impiety on the whole nation, and enjoining the magistrates to commit that very act of violence, which is punished with death in the peasantry. It was a revival of the penal laws, and that in the most dangerous and exceptionable part. He called upon gentlemen to consider, that they had no charge against the Catholics to warrant this measure; to consider, that they had not so much cause for suspicion of them; to consider, if they were a popish peasantry, they were actuated by no popish motive; to consider, that public thanks had been returned to the principal person of the catholic religion in that country, for his manly exertions to maintain the public peace and to protect the rights of the established clergy; and he thought, if there were any thing sacred or binding in religion, it would operate successfully against the present measure; for it would cast a stigma on the protestant religion.

He had heard, he said, of transgressors being dragged from the sanctuary, but he never heard of the sanctuary being demolished. It went so far as to hold out the laws as a sanction to sacrilege. If the Roman Catholics were of a different religion, yet they had one common God and one common Saviour with gentlemen themselves; and surely the God of the Protestant temple, was the God of the Catholic temple. What then did the clause enact? That the magistrate should pull down the temple of his God, and should it be rebuilt, and as often as it was rebuilt for three years, he should again prostrate it, and so proceed, in repetition of his abominations, and thus stab the criminal through the sides of his God: a new idea indeed! But this was not all, the magistrate was to sell by auction the altar of the divinity to pay for the sacrilege, that had been committed on his house. By preventing the chapel from being erected, he contended, that we must prohibit the exercise of religion for three years; and that to remedy disturbance we resorted to irreligion, and endeavoured to establish it by act of parliament. A commission of the peace might fall into the hands of a clergyman, and this clause first occasion him to preclude the practice of religion for three years, then involve him in vile abominations, and afterwards he must preach peace upon earth and good will towards men.

the magistrates to demolish the Roman Catholic chapels, in which any combinations should have been formed or an unlawful oath administered. The debate was carried on with great warmth on both sides to a late hour. Mr. Orde, the secretary, particularly remarked, that he never could have concurred in the clause for pulling down the chapels, and was therefore happy, that it had been abandoned by his friend. He lamented, that any thing should have appeared in print, purporting, that those insurrections had arisen from a popish conspiracy: he declared, he not only did not believe it, but in some places he could say; he knew it not to be true: and affirmed, that the insurgents had in some places deprived the Roman Catholic clergy of one half of their income. That in respect to the book of a Right Rev. Prelate, (the Bishop of Cloyne) though he differed from him in some of his opinions, he thought highly of his ability and upright intentions *.

Mr. Forbes

* Mr. Curran, in his speech, had particularly noticed the attempts to exaggerate the disturbances of Munster, and to dye them with a religious tint, and he thence took an occasion to advert, for a moment, to the ecclesiastical policy of Ireland for centuries past (7 Par. Deb. 193) The Church of Ireland, said he, has been in the hands of strangers, advanced to the mitre, not for their virtues or their knowledge, but quartered upon this country, through their own fervility or the caprice of their benefactors, inclined naturally to oppress us, to hate us, and to defame us; while the real duties of our religion have been performed by our own native clergy, who, with all the finer feelings of gentlemen and scholars, have been obliged to do the drudgery of their profession for forty or at most fifty pounds a year, without the means of being liberal, from their poverty, and without the hope of advancing themselves by their learning or their virtues, in a country where preferment was notoriously not to be attained by either. On this ground he vindicated the great body of the native acting clergy of Ireland, from any imputation, because of the small progress which protestantism had made among them: The pride of episcopacy, and the low state, to which our ministers of the gospel were reduced, abundantly accounted for it. Their distresses and oppression, he said, were the real objects of parliamentary consideration; and we could not interfere in the manner now proposed, without exposing them to the most imminent danger.

He then adverted to the nature of the disturbances in the south. He could not justify these outrages; they ought to be punished, but we ought not to forget that we had ourselves expressly admitted that they had proceeded from the supineness of magistrates and the oppression of landlords. But now, he said, an act like this would be a proclamation of a religious war in the kingdom. A publication had been industriously circulated through a number of editions, stating that a scheme was formed between the Catholics and Presbyterians, for the subversion of the established religion and constitution; and the former were gravely informed that their religion absolved them from all tie of allegiance to the state, or observance of their oaths. And this, he said, was not an opinion pronounced upon light authority, it was the deliberate assertion of a Reverend Prelate, whose judgment on one of the abstrusest points of our common law, had been opposed and with success to that

of

Mr. Forbes with undaunted perseverance again brought in his bill for limiting pensions. A pension bill had at all times been a favourite object of the patriots: but every former effort to procure it had, like the present, proved abortive. He contended, that from the mode of resistance offered by the enemies to that measure both in that and the preceding session, he was warranted in concluding, that the majority of the house admitted the principle of the bill: they would not otherwise have moved to adjourn it to a distant day, but have met it with a direct negative. He urged it upon the double principle of economy and constitution, and complained of pensions granted during pleasure to members of parliament even since the last session. Several gentlemen of the opposition made very long and animated speeches upon the abuses of the pension list, not only by rewarding demerit and infamy, and by corrupting the members of that house in particular by doubling the pensions of those, who before possessed them: but by introducing a new species of prostitution into that list, by the previous grant of honors and titles, for the direct purpose of engrafting pensions upon them. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Monk Mason, and Sir Henry Cavendish were the only opposers of the bill, who spoke to the question: the first alleged, that as a similar bill had before been rejected by that house, and nothing had happened to render that proper then, which had before been improper, he should move to have it

of our venerable chancellor, who was perhaps the ablest common lawyer in either kingdom, except only those gentlemen who were not of the profession; he then examined the justice of the learned author's publication, which he condemned as founded on illiberality and misrepresentation, and tending to obstruct the advancement of our religion, and to annihilate the provision of the established clergy; and tending also, manifestly to revive the dissensions, from which we had so recently emerged, and to plunge us into the barbarism, from which we were emerging, or perhaps to imbrue us in the bloodshed of a religious war.

He said, that however the public may excuse the effects of mistaken zeal in the reverend writer, this house would be degraded below itself, if it should adopt so silly an intolerance, or so abject a panic. He said, that this law would render the established church odious to the country, and of course, prevent the progress of the established religion; that it would expose the maintenance of the great body of the clergy, to be stripped of the scanty pittance, to which the cruelly unequal distribution of church revenues had confined them; that it would involve us in all the horrors of religious war; would throw us back into the miseries of a weak, a licentious and a divided people; it would be a repeal of the acts, which our wisdom had made in favour of our catholic brethren, in admitting them to the natural rights of fellow subjects and fellow christians. He therefore thought himself bound as a man anxious for the rights of the country, for its peace, its religion, and its morals, to vote against the committing of the bill.

read a second time on the 1st of August: the second also insisted, that the new bill ought to be founded on some actual abuse, and none had been proved: and the third said, the bill went too far: the best way would be to take the pensioners singly, every man upon his own merit. The sportman who fired at the whole covey, seldom hit a feather. In consonance with this idea, Mr. Jones said, that had he not full confidence, that the house would from its moderation adopt the bill, he should have moved, as an amendment: that an enquiry might be made into the character, circumstances, and situation of the persons, to whom pensions were then paid. The bill was lost by a division of 129 against 65.

On the 13th of March, 1787, Mr. Grattan, who appears to have been equally anxious to check the lawlessness, and relieve the distresses of the poor, brought forward the subject of tithes. In that session they had on the subject of tumults, made some progress, though not much. It had been admitted, that such a thing did exist, among the lower order of people, as distress; they had condemned their violence, they had made provisions for its punishment, but they had admitted also, that the peasantry were ground to the earth; they had admitted the fact of distress; they had acknowledged, that this distress should make part of the parliamentary enquiry; they had thought proper indeed to postpone the day, but were agreed, notwithstanding, in two things, the existence of present distress, and the necessity of future remedy. The system of supporting the clergy was liable to radical objections; in the south, it went against the first principle of human existence; in the south they tithed potatoes. The peasant paid often 7*l.* an acre for land, got 6*d.* a day for his labour, and paid from eight to twelve shillings for his tithe. That fact was sufficient to call for their interference: it attacked cultivation in its cradle, and tithed the lowest, the most general, and the most compassionate subsistence of human life. That was the more severely felt, because chiefly confined to the south, one of the great regions of poverty. In Connaught, potatoes paid no tithe, in the north a moderate modus took place; but in the south they paid a great tithe, and in the south they had perpetual disturbances. The tithe of potatoes was not the only distress; 6*l.* or 7*l.* an acre for land, and 6*d.* a day for labour, were also causes of misery; but the addition of eight, ten, or twelve shillings tithe, to the two other causes, was a very great aggravation of that misery; nor was it because they could not well interfere in regulating the rent of land or price of labour, that they
therefore

therefore should not interfere where they could regulate and relieve; why they should suffer a most heavy tithe to be added to the high price of rent and the low price of labour; it was a false supposition, that a diminution of the tithe of potatoes would be only an augmentation of the rent, for rent was not higher in counties where potatoes were not tithed, nor could an existing lease be cancelled and the rent increased by the diminishing or taking off the tithe: neither was there any similitude between tithe and rent, which would justify the comparison; rent was payment for land, tithe payment for capital and labour expended on land; the proportion of rent diminished with the proportion of the produce, that is, of the industry; the proportion of tithe increased with the industry, rent therefore, even a high rent, might be a compulsion on labour, and tithe a penalty. The cottier paid tithe, and the grazier did not; the rich grazier, with a very beneficial lease, and without any system of husbandry, was exempted, and threw the parson on labour and poverty. As this was against the first principle of husbandry, so another regulation was against the first principle of manufacture; they tithed flax, rape and hemp, the rudiments of manufacture. Hence, in the north, they had no flax farmers, though many cultivated flax. You gave a premium for the growth of flax, a premium for the land carriage and export of corn, and they gave the parson the tithe of the land, labour, and cultivation occupied therein, contrary to the prosperity of either; as far as they had settled they were wrong, and wrong where they had unsettled. What was the tithe was one question, what was titheable another. Claims had been made to the tithe of turf, the tithe of roots, moduses had been disputed, litigation had been added to oppression, the business had been ever shamefully neglected by parliament, and had been left to be regulated, more or less, by the dexterity of the tithe proctor, and the violence of the parish; so that distress had not been confined to the people, it had extended to the parson; their system was not only against the first principle of human existence, against the first principle of good husbandry, against the first principle of manufacture, against the first principle of public quiet, it went also against the security and dignity of the clergy. Their case had been reduced to two propositions, that they were not supported by the real tithes or the tenths; and that they were supported by a degrading annual contract; the real tithe or tenth is therefore unnecessary for their support, for they had done without it; and the annual contract was improper by their own admission, and the interference of parliament proper therefore.

therefore. Certainly the annual contract was below the dignity of a clergyman; he was to make a bargain with the squire, the farmer, and the peasant, on a subject which they did, and he did not understand: the more his humanity and his erudition the less his income; it was a situation where the parson's property fell with his virtues, and rose with his bad qualities. Just so the parishioner; he lost by being ingenuous, and he saved by dishonesty. The pastor of the people was made a spy on the husbandman: he was reduced to become the annual teasing contractor and litigant with a flock, among whom he was to extend religion by his personal popularity; an agent became necessary for him, it relieved him in this situation, and this agent or proctor involved him in new odium and new disputes; the squire not seldom defrauded him, and he was obliged to submit in repose and protection, and to reprove on the cottier, so that it often happened, that the clergyman did not receive the thirtieth, and the peasant paid more than the tenth; the natural result of that, was a system, which made the parson dependent on the rich for his repose, and on the poor for his subsistence. The spirit of many clergymen, and the justice of many country gentlemen, resisted such an evil in many cases, but the evil was laid in the law, which it was their duty and interest to regulate. From a situation so ungracious, from the disgrace and loss of making in his own person a little bargain with squires, farmers, and peasants, of each and every description, and from non-residence, the parson was obliged to take refuge in the assistance of a character, by name a tithe farmer, and by profession an extortioner; that extortioner became part of the establishment of the church; by interest and situation, there were two descriptions of men he was sure to defraud; the one was the parson, and the other the people; he collected sometimes at fifty per cent. he gave the clergyman less than he ought to receive, and took from the peasants more than they ought to pay; he was not an agent, who was to collect a certain rent, he was an adventurer, who gave a certain rate for the privilege of making a bad use of an unsettled claim; that claim, over the powers of collection, and what was teasing or provoking in the law, was in his hand an instrument not of justice but of usury; he sometimes set the tithes to a second tithe farmer, so that the land became a prey to a subordination of vultures.

In arbitrary countries the revenue was collected by men, who farmed it, and it was a mode of oppression the most severe; in the most arbitrary country the farming of the revenue was given to the Jews. They introduced that practice

tice into the collection of tithes, and the tithe farmer frequently called in aid of christianity the arts of the synagogue; obnoxious on account of all that, the unoffending clergyman thrown off the rich upon the poor, cheated exceedingly by his tithe farmer, and afterwards involved in his odium, became an object of outrage; his property and person were both attacked, and in both the religion and laws of the country scandalized and disgraced. The same cause, which produced a violent attack on the clergyman among the lower order of the community, produced among some of the higher orders a languor and neutrality in defending him. Thus outraged and forsaken he came to parliament; they abhorred the barbarity, they punished the tumult, they acknowledged the injury, but they were afraid of administering any radical or effectual relief; because they were afraid of the claims of the church; they claimed the tenth of whatever by capital, industry, or premium, was produced from land. One thousand men claimed this; and they claimed this without any stipulation, for what appears for the support of the poor, the repair of the church, or even the residence of the preacher. Alarmed at the extent of such a claim, they conceived, that the difficulty of collection was their security, and feared to give powers, which might be necessary for the collection of customary tithes, lest the clergy should use those powers for the enforcing of a long catalogue of dangerous pretensions. They had reason for that apprehension; and the last clause in the Riot Act had prompted a clergyman in the south to demand the tithe of agistment, and to attempt to renew a confusion, which their act intended to compose. The present state of the clergyman was, that he could not collect his customary tithe without the interference of parliament, and parliament could not interfere without making a general regulation, lest any assistance then given should be applied to the enforcement of dormant claims, ambiguous and unlimited.

Thus the situation of the clergy, as well as of the people, called on the house to take up at large the subject of the tithe. They had two grounds for such an investigation, the distress of the clergy, and the distress of the people.

He then moved the following resolution: "That if it appear, at the commencement of the next session of parliament, that public tranquillity has been restored in those parts of the kingdom that have lately been disturbed, and due obedience paid to the laws, this house will take into consideration the subject of tithes, and endeavour to form some plan for the honourable support of the clergy, and the ease of the people."

Mr.

Mr. Secretary Orde differed from Mr. Grattan, and insisted, that in the existing circumstances of the country it was impossible in any degree to hold out an expectation, that the house would even enter upon the subject. Sir Henry Hartonge seconded Mr. Grattan's motion, because the people was admitted on all hands to suffer great hardships and oppression. The debate was continued with much animation to a very late hour: and several of the gentlemen, who usually voted with Mr. Grattan, expressed their wishes, that he would withdraw his motion. This brought him up again at a very late hour; and he observed, that the subject had been agitated in such a variety of different ways, and opposed by so many gentlemen, that even at that late hour of the night he felt himself under the necessity of making some observations; and at the same time he assured the house, that nothing but a conviction of the propriety of the motion could make him resist the wishes of so many gentlemen, whom personally he loved and respected; but he should appear a very light man, were he, by withdrawing the motion, to give any ground to suppose, that he had taken up the subject without the most mature consideration, or that he would hazard such a motion without duly considering its consequences. This was not the case; and therefore it was not the smallness of the minority, in which he might be found, that would induce him to relinquish a measure arising from justice, mercy, and true policy. The only effect a defeat on that occasion could produce would be, to confirm him in a resolution of doing in the next session that, which the situation of the church and the people required. He had the utmost veneration, love, and respect for the church, which he was determined to prove, not by words only, but by acts. He had heard, indeed, very plausible professions of regard to the church; but while they remained mere words, unaccompanied by deeds, he should pay little regard to them. He was determined to prove his affection to the church by his actions, by securing her ministers in an honorable affluent independence, and by removing every cause of dispute that could endanger their persons or properties.

He could have wished, that government had not taken any part in the business. He could not see what an English cabinet, or an Irish secretary, had to do with it. The gentlemen of the country knew best their own situation; it should therefore have been left to them. On the riot bill the house had resolved themselves into a committee on that part of the lord lieutenant's speech, which respected the disturbances; they did not, however, examine at
all,

all, whether there were any disturbances, but they adopted a measure more adapted to an adult sedition than to the suppression of a flying peasantry. However, as ministers were responsible for the quiet of the country, the measure was agreed to ; but having done so, it certainly was now necessary to enquire into the distresses of the people, to enquire into their grievances after they had become coerced into obedience, after it had been declared by some of the first officers of the state, and allowed by every one, that they were bowed down with misery, and ground to powder with oppression ; after they had passed a law to shoot, and to hang, and to whip, and to banish, and to imprison them, could it be thought too soon to enquire into their grievances ? It might, indeed, be too late, but the dignity of parliament would be injured. And how has the right honorable gentleman maintained that dignity ? By sealing up the lips of the majority, and pronouncing his *veto* against compassion. I should have wished, continued he, he had not risen, or that the imperial *veto* had not sealed up the springs of humanity.

It has been said, that the exoneration of potatoes from tithe would be of no advantage to the poor. Where had gentleman learned that doctrine ? Certainly not in the report of Lord Carhampton. Or would they say, that taking sixteen shillings an acre off potatoes is no benefit to the miserable man, who depends on them as his only food ?

It had been admitted, that some tithes are illegal, such as those on turf, and the poor man was advised to institute a law-suit for relief. Were gentlemen serious when they gave that advice ? or would they point out, how the man, who earned five pence a day was to cope with the wealthy tithe farmer that oppressed him ?

It had been said, they should not pay any regard to people in a state of resistance ; that it would be derogatory from the dignity of parliament, and that they should apply in proper form. He laughed at such language ; there could never be a time when it was improper for the legislature to do justice. Mr. Grattan's motion was then superseded without a division.

When the bill for better executing the laws, and for the better preservation of the peace within the counties at large was read a second time, it was warmly opposed by several of the patriots : Mr. Griffith* was unwilling it should be brought

* This gentleman was very vehement in his expressions on this occasion. 7 Par. Deb. p. 445. He objected against going into a bill of that importance, in a house consisting of not one third of
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brought forward before so thin a house: Sir Edward Crofton opposed it on the same ground, as well as upon the unconstitutional tendency of the measure. Mr. Conolly entertained the most serious apprehensions from putting the country under an armed *marechaussée*, by making constables dependent upon government for their salaries. He had, he said, asked the attorney general, when the Riot Act was introduced, whether it were intended to be followed up with a general police bill; and the right honorable gentleman had said it was not. The attorney general still persisted, that no such thing was intended, and he pledged himself to prove in the committee, that the bill then before them had no such tendency. Mr. Conolly professed himself anxious to have the laws strictly executed, though in a constitutional way. He always approved of a Riot Act, and was confirmed in that opinion by the late

the members, and most of those present were aids de camp, searchers, packers, gaugers, placemen of all descriptions, and pensioners. And that it was highly indecent at that time to press forward a bill of such consequence, a bill, which created thirty-two additional judges, which annulled six hundred magistrates, which raised an army of three thousand soldiers, under the name of constables, and changed the administration of the justice of the country. Mr. John O'Neile said the bill would raise a body of five thousand sub constables, which was equal to one full third of the standing army, and had but two objects, viz. to increase the patronage of the crown, and to overawe the people. Mr. Charles O'Neile was vehement in the support of the bill.

On the further progress of this bill, Mr. Fitzgibbon very tauntingly upbraided the gentlemen on the opposition bench, for their silence, as if proceeding from inability and ignorance, which was highly resented by Mr. John O'Neile and Mr. Conolly: the former reminded the attorney-general of several unconstitutional acts brought in by him, some of which still disgraced the statute books: namely, the bill for securing the liberty of the press, which deprived the subject of his birth-right; a trial by jury; and vested in the magistrate the executive of judicial powers, making him, at once the judge, who was to preside, the jury to deliberate, and the executioner, who was to punish: his prosecutions by attachment, which met with the loud and general condemnation of all ranks of men and of lawyers fully as able as himself, which also deprived the subject of his birth-right, the trial by jury: and lastly, his bill to prevent tumultuous risings as it first stood, enjoining the prostration of the houses of religious worship, which would have driven two-thirds of the people to despair, madness, and rebellion. He warned ministry to desist from that overbearing exultation, with which they carried questions by their majorities, and insolently attempted to run down country gentlemen from standing up in support of their oppressed countrymen. Mr. Conolly observed, that a country gentleman might be well excused, if, in his zeal to serve the country, he fell into some error upon the constitution: but no apology could be made for the law officer of the crown, at the head of his own profession, who, to seduce that house, openly asserted so false a fact, as that in giving them that bill, he was *giving them the law of Great Britain*, where constables were not made and paid by government. The attorney-general made a full apology to Mr. O'Neile. 7 Parl. Debates, p. 474.

Marquis

Marquis of Rockingham, the known friend to liberty, who declined going over to Ireland, alledging, that he never would go to a country, where a Riot Act never had existed. Yet he would not object to the bill, if the constables to be appointed under it were to be elective in the counties by the grand juries. The bill was committed by a very large majority.

It was singular, that so many sessions had passed over without any motion or resolution concerning the body of Roman Catholics: the Protestant part of the nation had latterly become much reconciled to them, as appeared by the liberal declarations of the volunteer corps. On the 4th of April, 1787, Mr. Brown, of the college, without any previous notice, or any particular view, brought them under the consideration of the House of Commons, by a motion, which he carried, even against the vote of the secretary. The motion was in itself of trifling consequence: though every circumstance, which ascertains the disposition for the time being, of the government and parliament towards that numerous part of the Irish nation, cannot be indifferent to those, who take an interest in the history of that kingdom. He accordingly moved, “ *That the proper officer do lay before this house, copies of all the rolls, which
“ have been transmitted to, and deposited in the Rolls Office of this kingdom,
“ containing the names, titles, additions, and places of abode of such persons
“ as have taken the oath prescribed by the statute of the 13th and 14th
“ years of his present majesty, intituled, ‘ An act to enable his majesty’s sub-
“ jects of whatever persuasion, to testify their allegiance to him;’ specifying
“ the time when, and the court or magistrate, before whom they respectively
“ took the said oath. Also, that the proper officer do lay before this house,
“ copies of the returns, which have been made to the clerk of the privy coun-
“ cil, by the registers of the several dioceses in this kingdom, of the names,
“ abodes, ages, parishes, times and places of receiving popish orders of such
“ popish ecclesiastics as have been registered in pursuance of an act of the 21st
“ and 22d years of his present majesty, intituled, ‘ An act for the further re-
“ lief of his majesty’s subjects of this kingdom professing the popish religion.”

The Secretary of State could not conceive for what purpose those motions were made; and as the motion affected great bodies of men, he hoped he would oblige the house with his motive.

Mr. Browne said, that in the year 1774, an act passed, by which any of his

* 12 Journ. Com. p. 258.

majesty's subjects were enabled to testify their allegiance. The dissenters were particularly pleased at this, as before they had no such opportunity. In 1778, an act passed allowing Roman Catholics great advantages, such as taking long leases, with this proviso only, that they should previously have taken the oath of allegiance. Another act afterwards passed, taking off many restrictions, and giving them every advantage possessed by Protestants, except filling any of the offices of state. He wished to know how generally the oath of allegiance had been taken?

Mr. Charles O'Neill observed, that the motion might gratify curiosity, but could not answer any useful purpose; and the secretary of state thought the object of those motions was to insinuate an imputation upon two great bodies of men, to excite a suspicion of their fellow subjects. Convinced how groundless such a charge would be, and convinced of the extreme danger of making it, he should vote against the motion. Pamphlets of a very exceptionable nature had been published, and the nation might apprehend, that the house was proceeding to that investigation in consequence. Upon that ground he also objected to the motion. He wished the business not to be pursued, as it went to revive matters, which every man should wish buried in perpetual oblivion.

Mr. Griffith remarked, that there was not a body of people better affected than the Roman Catholics. A very ill-judged suspicion had already given them the alarm, and that motion would still further increase it. He hoped, from what had fallen from the secretary of state, the motion would be withdrawn. It was, however, put and carried.

Two other subjects occupied the attention of parliament during the session of 1787: one of them was, the consideration of the treaty of navigation and commerce with the French king:* the other was a plan of education, which appeared to have been a favorite subject of attention and study to the secretary for two years. Shortly before the close of the session, he submitted

* Mr. Mason reported from the committee of the whole house, to whom it was referred to take into consideration, that part of his grace the lord-lieutenant's speech, which related to the treaty of navigation and commerce, concluded by his majesty with the Most Christian king, the resolutions, which the committee had directed him to report in the house, which he read in his place, and after delivered in at the table. They were fifteen in number, and are to be seen in the Appendix, No. LXXVII.

the plan of it to the house; but it was not relished or supported according to his wishes or expectations. The parliament was prorogued on the 28th of May: and his excellency's speech comprised the usual thanks for the supplies, assurances of his majesty's affectionate protection, and promises of his own economical application of the revenue, and a recommendation to the people of regular and peaceable demeanor.

In the long and interesting discussion of the treaty of navigation and commerce with the French king, the parliament of Great Britain was not altogether inattentive to the interests of Ireland. When the report of the committee upon that treaty was brought up to the British House of Commons, notice was taken of what had been said relative to Ireland, and the Irish propositions, arguing, that great good might result to Ireland, if she passed laws adapted to the regulations of duties contained in the tariff.

Mr. Flood said, that he could assure the right honorable gentleman and the house, that he felt no extreme anxiety for the attainment of any benefits for Ireland through the medium of a treaty, to which he had so many objections on the ground of its being disadvantageous to great Britain. He had on a former day stated, that if the sentiments of the manufacturers remained unaltered, they could not but be adverse to a treaty with France, founded on principles so transcendently more injurious to their interests, than the principles of the former treaty with Ireland. Nothing could be more self-evident, than that if the reasoning of the manufacturers had been right on that occasion and their apprehensions had been justifiable, the same style of reasoning would apply more forcibly on the present occasion, and their apprehensions would be still more justifiable. With regard to the court of France understanding, that Ireland was implied and comprehended in the present treaty, although it were not so declared in express words in any part of the treaty, he asked what security had Ireland for her share of the advantages or privileges, which the treaty held out to Great Britain, if either privileges or advantages were likely to arise from it, any more than she had for the court of Lisbon's extending to her the advantages of the Methuen treaty, which it was well known she had refused to suffer Ireland to participate of, in violation of the spirit and meaning of that treaty, and which treaty on the part of Portugal, although it had been five years in negotiation, no redress had been obtained for Ireland. Mr. Flood stated his conviction, that the commercial treaty was neither likely to be a benefit to Great Britain or Ireland, and he thought a stronger proof of its objectionable invalidity could not be stated to the friends
of

of Ireland, (and every honest Briton must be the friend of Ireland, because her interests were so deeply involved and interwoven with the interests of Great Britain, that they were inseparable considerations,) than the extraordinary position, in which the commercial treaty would place the two countries of France and Ireland, by entitling France to commercial privileges and advantages in Great Britain, to which Ireland was not entitled; and by entitling Ireland to greater privileges and advantages in France, than she could obtain in Great Britain.

Mr. Grenville declared, that Great Britain had two years ago made a liberal offer to Ireland, which the parliament of that misled and infatuated people had been persuaded to refuse. He never would admit the doctrine; that therefore Great Britain had no right to treat and conclude a commercial treaty with France, adapted to her own commercial circumstances, without considering herself as a dependent on Ireland, and consulting her previously upon the subject. Mr. Grenville went into a recapitulation of the parliamentary transactions of the year 1785, respecting the commercial arrangements then agitated in favour of Ireland, and consulting her previously upon the subject. He said, that the offer of Great Britain had been more liberal than it perhaps ever might prove again; and that it ill became those, who had principally stood forward in the parliament of Ireland to persuade that assembly to reject the offer, to be afterwards among the foremost to endeavour to prevent this country from carrying into execution a treaty with France, which was concluded with a view to the benefit of Great Britain. Ireland had been favored with an early option of solid and substantial advantage: and Ireland had rejected the offer under circumstances of great delusion, and under artful misrepresentations of the real nature of that offer, he was ready to admit; but having rejected it, till she saw her fatal delusion, and was, from conviction of the value of what she had been so unhappily persuaded to refuse, induced to ask Great Britain to give her a second option, she had not the smallest pretensions to complain of neglect of her interests on the part of Great Britain; and the more especially, as the present commercial treaty with France had been concluded with an eye to her interests equally with the interests of this country, as it lay with the parliament of Ireland to decide for themselves, and if they thought the treaty advantageous to that country, they had it in their power to make it so, by passing laws adapted to the stipulations in the tariff.

Mr. Flood answered, that he could not have conceived it possible for three or four natural expressions to have drawn down upon him an animadversion,
delivered

delivered in so high and imperative a tone. Being a native of Ireland, and having the honor to possess a seat in the parliament of that kingdom, he had thought it his indispensable duty not to sit silent, when so much had been said on the subject of Ireland, and its commercial interests; but he plainly saw, that if any man professed himself to be the real friend of Ireland, he was to be reprehended and stigmatized as the enemy of Great Britain. He had before declared, that he was a friend to both countries, and had said that every honest Briton must be the same. The right honorable gentleman had contended, that Great Britain was not the dependent of Ireland, it was undoubtedly true; but was Great Britain not bounden to take care of the interests of every part of the empire? The parliament of Great Britain was the imperial parliament: was it not then the indispensable duty of that parliament, in every great national measure, to look to the general interests of the empire, and to see that no injurious consequences followed to the peculiar interests of any part of it. If this were admitted, would any man say, that Ireland was not to be considered on the present important occasion? And why, because the parliament of Ireland had rejected, and rejected with disdain, the commercial treaty of 1785. The right honorable gentleman had told them, that in 1785, Great Britain made a liberal offer to Ireland. This was the first time that it had been owned, that the treaty of 1785 was the offer of Great Britain, at the time the right honorable gentleman (he believed) had called the measure the Irish propositions, and stated them as coming from Ireland. He had now confessed the fact, and acknowledged (more, perhaps, than he meant to admit) that the propositions were English propositions, sent originally from hence to Ireland, then sent back, and ultimately returned from England in a shape widely altered from their original appearance. The right honorable gentleman had talked of delusion, and hinted, that those who endeavoured to open the eyes of the parliament of Ireland, were ashamed to avow their conduct. The right honorable gentleman was in error. He gloried in the share, which he had taken in that transaction. The offer had been insidious, and under colour of commercial advantage, the constitution of Ireland was endeavoured to be bartered away. Mr. Flood next took notice of what he termed the right honorable gentleman's declaration, that till Ireland asked to have the propositions revived, she was to expect no favour from Great Britain. He said, that it reminded him of the declaration of the right honorable gentleman (a member of that house) in an eminent situation in Ireland, who had
obtained

obtained an address as a sanction of the measure, and who triumphantly told the House of Commons of Ireland, that in less than three months, when the people were undeceived, and the delusion in which they had been involved, cleared up, they would come in numbers to the house, execrate those members who had been most active in opposing that mass of propositions, some parts of which they had been told, were English, some part Irish, some commercial, and some political, and earnestly implore their revival. To ensure this triumph, some thousand copies, accompanied with the address to the lord-lieutenant, had been printed and disseminated throughout the kingdom of Ireland, but to that day, no man had ventured to mention the revival of the propositions in parliament, nor was it at all likely that they should. Mr. Flood said, that he hoped it would not be thought that he had obtruded the subject of Ireland upon the house. It had been agitated for a considerable time before he interfered; nor should he have said thus much, had he not thought that his silence would have been deemed a dereliction on his part of a cause, which it would ever be his pride to assist in maintaining and supporting. There was something so high in the tone of the right honorable gentleman, that it struck his ear as extraordinary; he could not imagine that the right honorable gentleman meant any thing personal; but he begged leave to say, that no man living should brow-beat him, or awe him into an unbecoming silence.*

Mr. W. Grenville said, that in the first place, he hoped that no man would believe that he meant to brow-beat the right honorable gentleman; and far less could he have intended to have stood up as professing to entertain any sentiment inimical to the interests of Ireland. To the contrary, he professed and felt a warm affection and sincere regard, grounded on principles of personal gratitude for past kindnesses and attentions to himself, and on a variety of

* I have given this speech of Mr. Flood's in the British House of Commons, as largely as I found it reported, not only to prove what were the opinion and feelings of that part of the Irish nation and senate, which adopted his reasoning, and moved by his influence (and they were not few), but more particularly to draw the reader's attention to the avowals of Mr. Flood, the most violent and impassioned asserter of Irish independence, that there existed a political necessity for a controlling superiority in the British, which was the imperial parliament, whose indispensable duty it was, in every great national measure, to look to the general interests of the empire, and to see that no injurious consequences followed to the peculiar interests of any part of it. Now, as Ireland did not claim any such controlling right over Great Britain, the independence claimed could not be real, for all independence must be reciprocal. The admission of these principles demonstrates the political necessity of an incorporate union for the advantage of the empire at large.

near and interesting considerations. In the progress of the Irish propositions through that house, he had been actuated by those principles, and had stood up as the friend of Ireland to stem the torrent of prejudice, to resist and oppose the objections of interested individuals, and to reason into silence and conviction, the groundless alarms and apprehensions of those manufacturers; who, misled by factious men, were taught to be terrified at imaginary evils, and to expect dangers never likely to happen. Mr. Grenville stated the object and end of the Irish propositions, to have been for Great Britain to grant to Ireland as full a participation of her commercial advantages as could be permitted consistently with her own safety, and to secure a suitable return. The idea of its being intended to assume the power of legislating for Ireland, he contended, was nothing more than an empty phantom, raised by the machinations of sophistry, to frighten the parliament of Ireland from accepting one of the greatest boons ever offered to one country by the impulse of the liberal and affectionate feelings of another.

Mr. Fox reprobated the idea, that nothing beneficial to Ireland was to be thought of, because she had refused the propositions of 1785. He entered into a detail of the nature of those propositions; stated his own conduct respecting them; and concluded with moving, by way of amendment, that the words, "this day se'nnight," be inserted in the motion, instead of the word "now."

Mr. Pelham seconded the motion, declaring, that he should have moved it, had not his right honorable friend made such amendment.

When the commercial treaty was under debate in the British House of Lords, the Marquis of Lansdowne,* ever attentive to the interest of Ireland, observed, that this matter gave him the highest concern as well as astonishment. When he lately heard in the country, that a body of the Irish privy counsellors had been collected in England, to consult with ministry,

* In the beginning of his speech on this occasion the noble Marquis had, in defending himself against an imputation from Lord Carlisle, of having spoken both for and against the treaty, said, that he had approved the principles and tendency of the measure, though he objected to some of the articles in the detail. The fact was, that he did then stand, as through his life he always had stood, aloof from parties. He was of no party. It was his pride and principle to be of no faction, but to embrace every measure on its own ground, free from all connexion. Such had been his political creed: as such he stood before the people, and as such he coveted to be judged by them
22 Parl. Deb. Lords, p. 98.

he had no conception, that the conference was on the subject of a French treaty with Ireland, while England and Ireland still remained in the same distracted state as before. Nothing could be more extraordinary than this; for the time was favorable; Ireland was a nation of good humour; the Duke of Rutland and Mr. Orde were men, who would make her good humoured, if she were the contrary: the conduct of the English manufacturers, in the present case of the French treaty, must crush all their former objections to the system of the Irish propositions. The present then was the moment for ministers to revive the idea of a beneficial connexion. Why was it not done? He did not mean the vague, ill-natured, and inadequate Irish propositions, as they were called; but a plain, simple, good-intentioned scheme of reciprocal intercourse, taking off the shackles that lay on our trading laws, which was all the union he desired. It was monstrous to think, that their privy counsellors should be assembled, and nothing done; at a time too when the Right Boys exhibited such a scene, to whom, for aught he knew, every consul from the court of France may prove a minister.

The Duke of Rutland died in October, 1787. This nobleman was calculated to command the affections of the Irish nation: he was open, free, liberal, and convivial: he committed the management of the public business to those about him: and unfortunately for that nation, the expences of driving the state equipage through the beaten track necessarily increased in an alarming degree. In this very year the pension list was increased by additional grants to the amount of 8730*l*.* Sir Henry Hartsonge, Mr. Conolly, and many who had most strenuously opposed his administration, rendered willing tribute to his amiable qualities, to the uprightness of his heart, and the honorable views and intentions with which he acted on all occasions. The errors of his administration they attributed to his advisers, and the majority of that house, who had constantly supported them. To an aggrieved people it is however immaterial, whether the noxious system proceed immediately from a depraved or austere governor, or immediately through those ministers, who abuse the frankness and ease of a benevolent one. The melancholy necessity of a corrupt majority in parliament to support a permanent and commanding influence of the English executive, or rather of the English cabinet in the councils of Ireland, has been faithfully delineated by the late Earl of Clare, who for nearly

* 8 Parl. Deb. p. 8.

the last twenty years of his life was one of the most powerful directors and supporters of that very influence.* “Such a connexion,” said he, “is formed not for mutual strength and security, but for mutual debility; it is a connexion of distinct minds and distinct interests, generating national discontent and jealousy, and perpetuating faction and misgovernment in the inferior country. The first obvious disadvantage to Ireland is, that in every department of the state, every other consideration must yield to parliamentary power; let the misconduct of any public officer be what it may, if he is supported by a powerful parliamentary interest, he is too strong for the king’s representative. A majority in the parliament of Great Britain will defeat the minister of the day; but a majority of the parliament of Ireland against the king’s government, goes directly to separate this kingdom from the British crown. If it continues, separation or war is the inevitable issue; and therefore it is, that the general executive of the empire, as far as is essential to retain Ireland as a member of it, is completely at the mercy of the Irish parliament; and it is vain to expect, so long as man continues to be a creature of passion and interest, that he will not avail himself of the critical and difficult situation, in which the executive government of this kingdom must ever remain, under its present constitution, to demand the favors of the crown, not as the reward of loyalty and service, but as the stipulated price, to be paid in advance, for the discharge of a public duty. Every unprincipled and noisy adventurer, who can achieve the means of putting himself forward, commences his political career on an avowed speculation of profit and loss; and if he fail to negotiate his political job, will endeavour to extort it by faction and sedition, and with unblushing effrontery to fasten his own corruption on the king’s ministers. English influence is the inexhaustible theme for popular irritation and distrust of every factious and discontented man, who fails in the struggle to make himself the necessary instrument of it. Am I then justified in stating, that our present connexion with Great Britain, is in its nature formed for mutual debility; that it must continue to generate national discontent and jealousy, and perpetuate faction and misgovernment in Ireland.”†

If

* Speech of the Earl of Clare, p. 45.

† This avowal of the necessary continuance of national discontent, jealousy, faction, and misgovernment in Ireland, from that noble lord, who bore so pre-eminent a share in the government of that

If credit be given, as it ought, to the truth of what Lord Clare has further asserted, of the political state of Ireland at that period, we shall find, that the Irish nation then was, and that it was impossible that it should not be, an aggrieved and discontented people. It was, said he, a fact of public notoriety, that on the acknowledgment of Irish independence in 1782, the first step taken by some gentlemen of that country, who had been in the habit of considering the Irish nation as their political inheritance, was to make it a muniment of their title, by forming a political confederacy, offensive and defensive, in both countries. The basis of that alliance was, mutual engagement to play the independence of Ireland against their political antagonists

that country, at once stamps the quality of those majorities in parliament, which he so long triumphantly led, and fatally proves, that a most powerful argument for the union was to be drawn from the inveterate corruption of the Irish government. This argument in favor of the union might have been urged by any member of the Irish parliament more graciously, by none more forcibly, than by the Earl of Clare. As that nobleman has now paid the debt of nature, and as he bore the principal part in bringing about the union of his country with Great Britain, it is no slight duty of the historian to lay before the reader his real character: the motives of his conduct may be collected, if at all, from his own avowals. He was one of the most eminent and successful lawyers, that ever adorned the Irish bar: he came early into parliament, and having succeeded to a very ample patrimony, the extraordinary perquisites of his profession rendered him one of the most independent members of the House of Commons. From the moment of his appointment to be attorney general in the administration of the Duke of Portland, 1782, he was to the hour of his death most devotedly and uniformly attached to the interests and influence of the British cabinet. He was singularly gifted by nature to succeed in the elevated stations of attorney general and chancellor, in which he successively moved. His professional talents and knowledge were inferior to none at the bar; and his personal intrepidity, spirited exertions, and unwearied zeal in supporting the cause he had undertaken, were superior to those of any other political character in the nation. He rather spurned, than courted popularity. He was the first Irishman, to whom the British cabinet had entrusted the great seal, and is universally allowed to have performed the functions of that important office with infinitely more ability and effect than any of his predecessors on that bench. He was an excellent landlord. But as a public political character he was very unpopular. He was the promoter of all the strong measures of government, which created so much discontent at different periods throughout the nation: he never favored, and latterly was the principal agent in suppressing the volunteers; he determinately opposed the enlargement of the indulgencies to the Catholics, and uniformly supported every measure of the British cabinet, which either did or was supposed to encroach upon the liberty and welfare of his country. In parliament he was always assiduous and powerful, frequently sarcastic and heated, and sometimes arrogant and overbearing. In private he was warm in his attachments, and unrelenting in his enmities. In his complacencies he was engaging, often fastidious in his deportment, and in his domestic habits convivial and luxurious.

whenever

whenever they happened to occupy the seat of power; and, if he were to judge by the conduct of the parties principally concerned up to that hour, to foment turbulence and faction in Ireland even to open rebellion, if it should be found necessary to the removal of an obnoxious British administration. In prosecution of that very laudable system, it became an essential object of the confederacy to guard against any settlement between Great Britain and Ireland, which might cut off the most obvious sources of mutual jealousy and discontent.

Whilst there exists the semblance of a parliament in a country, which is at all, however unequally, divided, the bulk of the people naturally will side with one party or the other: and if according to this nobleman, as long as man continues to be a creature of passion and interest, the majority of parliament be to consist of those, who receive the favor of the crown, not as the reward of loyalty and service, but as the stipulated price to be paid in advance for the discharge of public duty, it necessarily follows, that the bulk of those, whom the rays of royal favor do not reach, must be in opposition to those stipendiary servants of the crown, who were necessary to keep up that system of English influence upon Irish government, to which such terrible effects were necessarily annexed. Nothing therefore could be more true, than that the whole Irish people (except those who received emolument through the revenue, police, or other departments of government,) were unexceptionably discontented at the system of government, then carrying forward. Nay, the very part of the new viceroy's conduct, which was most laudable, at this time swelled the stream of discontent. His economical vigilance upon the application of public revenue, and his determination to reform the abuses in the several departments, had raised against him the whole host of fiscal dependents throughout the nation. It may indeed easily be imagined with what zealous energy they laboured to thwart the views and render the character of the lord lieutenant unpopular. In the metropolis the citizens were meeting by deputies from each parish to prepare petitions against the police bill; and by way of reviving the spirit of liberty, which they conceived the late strong measures of government were aimed at extinguishing, the corporation of Dublin took an opportunity of presenting a formal request to the provost and fellows of the university, in grateful remembrance of that disinterested patriot the late Dr. Lucas, to give a gratuitous education to his son;

son; to whom the provost and fellows most liberally granted an apartment and commons in college, without any expence to his family.

On the 17th of January, 1788, the Marquis of Buckingham met the parliament for the first time: in his speech from the throne he condoled with them upon the loss his majesty's service had sustained by the death of the Duke of Rutland, whose public and private virtues had deservedly conciliated the esteem of that kingdom; and he called upon them to take part in the satisfaction, which his majesty felt in the situation of foreign affairs, particularly in the restoration of the constitution and tranquillity of the united provinces by the co-operation of his majesty and the King of Prussia, under the conduct of the Duke of Brunswick. When the address had been moved for and seconded, Mr. Parsons objected to it, because in speaking of the Duke of Rutland's administration, it seemed entirely to approve of it, and to bind the house to pursue the same measures, which that administration had done. He owned he was not at the moment prepared to enter into a subject of so much importance, but there were some points so notoriously disagreeable, and so highly injurious to the country, that he could not for a moment suppose the house would adopt any measure, which would look like an approbation of them, much less would it pledge itself to retain all the measures of the Duke of Rutland's administration. He trusted the house would not now approve the act, by which the press in Ireland was laid under a degree of restraint unknown in England; he well knew, that under certain circumstances, very dissimilar laws might be found necessary in the two countries, but the great fundamental principles of law ought to be the same in both; and therefore he hoped under the present administration to see the press liberated from the shackles, which the last had imposed: he also hoped to see the unconstitutional exercise of attachments discontinued; the present administration he trusted would feel no necessity for such a guard. He also hoped a general police and riot act would be no longer deemed necessary; and therefore, if gentlemen meant to do away these abominations, he could see no necessity for pledging themselves to, or for approving of them: they were all acts, which tended to increase prerogative, and diminish liberty, and the address as it stood embraced them all. He observed, that throughout the whole speech, and the whole address, the word *æconomy* was no where to be found; he asked, therefore, did the present ministry mean to continue the
same

same system of extravagance, by which the last had loaded the country with taxes? or did they mean to retrench? If the latter, why not declare it? The expences of the country were enormous, and exceeded those of Lord Carlisle's administration, which was deemed sufficiently profuse, by a sum of not less than 660,000*l.* per annum; he again desired to know, was the profusion to be continued; There was no promise to the contrary in the speech; and therefore every man must infer it was; though it would be somewhat strange, after all the examination which had been made into the public offices, and which the nation supposed was for the purpose of retrenchment.

Several gentlemen of the opposition, out of tenderness to the character of the late Duke of Rutland, who was personally beloved, prevailed on Mr. Parsons to withdraw his motion, conceiving that the address did not commit them to the approbation of the measures of his administration. Mr. Parsons, however, on the next evening, when the address was moved, still persisted, that the amendment he had to propose, so far from casting blame upon the late Duke of Rutland, was the most favorable comment upon his administration, by laying the defects of it at the door of his ministers, who really were guilty.

He accordingly moved the following amendment, by expunging the words, *the wise and steady course of his public administration, had established the public tranquillity and exalted the credit of the nation*; and inserting in the room thereof the following: "at the same time, our regard to truth, "and to the real interests of his majesty and his loyal people of Ireland, "which will not suffer us to convey an imperfect representation of the state "of this kingdom to his royal mind, compel us to declare, that notwithstanding the good disposition, which we are willing to believe our late lamented chief governor had for the prosperity of this island, yet, "through the misguidance of his counsellors, this kingdom during his administration, has been afflicted with a most burthenfome encrease of taxation, and with several grievous and severe acts, repugnant to the principles "of our wise constitution, and injurious to the liberties of his majesty's "subjects of this realm." This amendment was rejected without opposition.*

Early in the session, the secretary of state called the attention of the house to a subject of the highest importance to the peace and tranquillity of the

* 8 Par. Deb. p. 13.

kingdom,

kingdom, and which had been strongly recommended from the throne; he meant the security of the established church. He reminded the house, that he had in the last session introduced a bill to protect the rights of the clergy, that had been wrested from them by force or fraud. He was sorry, that the bill, though founded in lenity, had fallen short of its intent. Although the outrages of the south had somewhat abated, yet a spirit of combination against the payment of tithes still existed, and notices signed by Captain *Right* were in circulation, enjoining all persons, under the severest penalties, not to pay tithe for the year 1787. If in 1787, there existed a necessity for such an act to enforce compensation to the clergy for tithes withheld up to that time; the necessity was now become much stronger by the extension of the combination against the clergy; many of whom in the south were now reduced to beggary. He concluded by observing, that the present dispute did not lie between the farmers and the clergy, but between the legislature and a lawless rabble. He then moved, “ that leave be given to bring
 “ in a bill to enable all ecclesiastical persons and bodies, rectors, vicars, and curates, and impropriators, and those deriving by, from, or under them, to recover a just compensation for the tithes withheld from them in the year 1787, in the several counties and counties of cities therein mentioned, against such persons who were liable to the same; and to explain and amend an act made in the twenty-seventh year of his majesty’s reign, intitled, “ An act to
 “ enable all ecclesiastical persons and bodies, rectors, vicars and curates, and
 “ impropriators, and those deriving by, from, or under them, to recover
 “ a just compensation for the tithes withheld from them in the year 1786, in
 “ the several counties therein mentioned, against such persons who were
 “ liable to the same.”

The subject of tithes took up the principal attention of the nation, both within and without the parliament, during the first months of the year 1787. The speech, which Mr. Grattan delivered upon this delicate and important subject, in the House of Commons, on the 14th of February, 1787, made such a sensation in the country, that it was published with a very spirited preface, and ran through four editions in less than a month: upon a division, however, in the house, 49 only voted for Mr. Grattan’s motion against 121, which was for this reasonable proposition, viz. that a committee should be appointed to enquire, whether any just cause of discontent existed amongst the people of the province of Munster, or of the counties of Kil-

kenny

kenny or Carlow, on account of tithe, or the collection of tithes; and if any, to report the same, together with their opinion thereupon.*

The new viceroy had not been inactive in strengthening the ministerial party in parliament. In several instances he had been successful. What communications he made to his converts is not to be now known: but it was a general complaint, that his excellency would not condescend to make known, even to his friends, the plan or even principles of his administration.† As far indeed, as could be collected from some of his measures, it was generally concluded, that the whole system of the late administration was intended to be followed up: consequently the same system of opposition was adhered to. Notwithstanding, therefore, the new lord lieutenant's economical attack upon the subaltern officers of the revenue, the gentlemen of the opposition did not give his excellency credit for any economical reform in the original dispensation of the public Money. Mr. Forbes, on the 29th of January 1788 desired, that a list of the pensions granted since the last session of parliament might be read. He then objected to a pension of 1000*l.* to James Brown, Esq. the late prime serjeant, on the principle only of its being granted to a member of the house during pleasure. He remarked, that by the English act for further securing the liberties of the subject, it was provided, that after the accession of the present family to the throne, no pensioner during pleasure, should sit or vote in the House of Commons. The people of Ire-

* 8 Par. Deb. p. 192. As no alteration in the system of tithes in Ireland has taken place since Mr. Grattan delivered his wonderful speech upon that subject, it will be found in the Appendix, No. LXXVIII. for the instruction of those who interest themselves about it. It is a master-piece of eloquence and reasoning on that interesting subject.

† Amongst other profelytes, that went over to the new viceroy was Mr. Longfield, who had considerable parliamentary interest; he and the friends he introduced had uniformly opposed the late administration: amongst these was Mr. Curran, who having been brought into parliament by Mr. Longfield, could not bend his principles to the pliancy of his friend, or take a subordinate part in supporting an administration, whose intended measures were made a secret of: he therefore purchased a seat in a vacant borough, and offered it to Mr. Longfield for any person, whose principles were at his command. Thus did Mr. Curran retain his seat and parliamentary independence: and Mr. Longfield was enabled to fulfil his engagements with the minister, for his own and his dependant's votes in parliament. Two exceptions from the system of the late administration were prominently conspicuous, in that of the Marquis of Buckingham, neither of which went far in increasing his popularity. The first was a rigid inspection into all the subaltern offices of the fiscal departments of government: and the other a rigorous economical reform throughout the culinary and other household departments of the castle.

land had a right to participate with the inhabitants of Great Britain, in all the benefits and privileges of that act, and the Bill of Rights. He moved, "that this pension was a misapplication of the revenue." He also on the same day moved, that the pension of 640*l.* to Thomas Higinbotham for life, adding, that he was astonished that so large a portion of the public money should be disposed of without the knowledge or privity of the chancellor of the exchequer; and that for such a transaction all the servants of the crown should deny any responsibility; he then objected to a pension of 1200*l.* per annum to Robert Ashwood, for the life of his son, and also two other pensions of 300*l.* each, and one of 200*l.* to the same person, for the lives of his other children. He stated, that a pension of 2000*l.* per annum had been granted in the year 1755, for the life of Frederick Robinson; that the family of Robinson had lately sold that pension to Mr. Ashworth, and had influence with government sufficient to prevail on the minister to change the life in the grant, and to insert the lives of the young children of Mr. Ashworth, in the place of Mr. Robinson; that this management was now become a frequent practice, and if not restrained, must tend to perpetuate the burdens on the establishment, and thereby a grant of a pension for life, would operate as a lease for lives, with a covenant for perpetual renewal. He therefore moved, "that the above pension was an improvident disposition of the revenue." He then expressed his concern, that measures in their nature so highly exceptionable should receive the sanction of the new administration. However, all his motions were negatived without a division.

Mr. Forbes made also several unsuccessful motions for reducing the public expence by discontinuing the government allowances of country houses for some of their officers, and town houses for most servants of the crown. On this occasion he observed, without being contradicted, that there were few members upon or in the vicinity of the treasury bench, the rents of whose houses were not charged on the public accounts. This gentleman on making these several motions had very pointedly remarked, that as he had in common with most persons, in and out of parliament, conceived strong expectations of great reform in point of public expence, to be effected by the new administration, it was the duty of every member of that house to lend his assistance to the minister, to enable him to attain that desirable object. Nothing could check the unabating ardor and perseverance of Mr. Forbes. He had early in the session given the minister notice of his intention to bring in a bill to dis-
able

able any person from being chosen a member of, or from sitting or voting in the house of commons, who had any pension during pleasure, or for any number of years, from, or held any office or place of profit created after a certain time, under the crown, and to limit the amount of pensions: but having received no encouragement from him, he brought in his bill unsupported by the secretary, which having been received and read a first time, the chancellor of the exchequer moved, that it should be read a second time on the 1st of August, alledging, that the subject had often been before the house and uniformly rejected.

Mr. Conolly said, neither the situation of the country, nor that of the pension list, were the same they were when this bill had formerly been rejected; since that time the pensions had increased, were increasing, and ought to be diminished; if government were in earnest in their professions of œconomy, they would let the bill go fairly forward to discussion; if they resisted the bill, he never would believe their professions sincere. They had a numerous and rising royal family; to their support the country would be proud to contribute. England had many worthy old servants, both civil and military; to those men they should not grudge a subsistence, but to have a 100,000*l.* a year squandered on the unworthy, or bestowed as the reward of corruption, was a grievance the country could not bear; and if the minister would agree with parliament to set limits to that profusion, he should find himself fit much easier in the seat of government, than if he should resist it.

Mr. secretary Fitzherbert said, he had declined taking a part in support of the bill for many reasons; one was, that he thought it in much abler hands: another, that the present time did not demand it. The house had, he observed, given credit to the present government for their intentions of œconomy, intentions to which they would most rigidly adhere. Suppose then, said he, the bill should pass, what construction would such a measure bear? Would it not be as if the house should say, we have great confidence in the present government, we are convinced of their integrity, and we believe they will pursue the interest of the kingdom; we therefore lay them under restrictions, which we never imposed on any other government. Then supposing his concurrence in the bill, what construction would his conduct wear? Would it not be saying this, you have expressed great confidence in government, but I who know them better, desire you not to trust them.

Sir, the prerogative of the crown to bestow marks of approbation upon such

subjects as have distinguished themselves by their merits, was one of its dearest rights.*

The question, upon the adjournment, was carried by a majority of 103 against 40.

The discontent of the people out of doors, was great: yet the ministry appeared to set it at defiance. Mr. Hartley presented a petition from the inhabitants of Dublin and the liberties thereof paying taxes, to be heard by council against the police bill, which was signed by 7000 and upwards. But the attorney general said, he should be extremely sorry, that there should be 7000 seditious persons existing in the kingdom any where, but on paper. It was he said, admitted by all, that the police bill wanted amendment; and a bill was then before parliament to explain and amend that act. Did the petitioners mean to petition against the bill for amending that act, of which they so much complained.

The most violent attack upon the minister, during this session of parliament, was made on the 29th of February, when Mr. Forbes moved his address to the crown, in order, at least, to leave to posterity, on the face of their journals the grievances, under which the people laboured in the year 1788. He prefaced his motion by a very interesting speech founded on facts, to be collected from the journals of the house, or from authentic documents then lying on the table. He travelled over much of his former arguments against the prodigality of the late administration, which had increased the pension list by 26,000*l*. He took that opportunity of giving notice, that he meant next session to offer a bill to that house for the purpose of creating a responsibility in the ministers of Ireland, for the application of the revenue of that kingdom: The only authority, under which the vice treasurer then paid any money, was a king's letter, countersigned by the commissioners of the English treasury. He adverted, with marked censure, to the addition of 2,000*l*. to the

* In this debate Mr. Denis Browne, rather against order, referred to an assertion of the lord lieutenant in conversation, that he had rather put his right hand into the fire, than grant a pension to any person, which every honest man should not approve of. Sir Henry Cavendish, though he declared his unqualified devotion to that administration, yet remarked, that doubling the pensions of members might be avoided, "for," said he, "suppose it appears, that 400*l*. a year are annexed " to the name of a member of this house, and that no particular cause could be assigned for the " grant, may it not be conjectured, that it was made for his service in that house, and if so, an " additional pension is unnecessary, for he that has 400*l*. a year for his vote, will not refuse voting " though he were to be refused 400*l*. a year more." 8 *Par. Deb.* p. 355.

salary of the secretary in the late administration, and to the large sums expended in the purchase and embellishment of his house in the Phoenix Park, and to the present intent of granting a pension of 2,000*l.* to that very secretary for life : * which was establishing a most mischievous precedent for such grants to every future secretary. He was sorry to hear the ostensible minister avail himself of the same argument, which his predecessors had successfully used for the last ten years in resisting every attack upon the pension list. He then enlarged upon the pernicious consequences of placing implicit confidence in administration ; and supported his thesis by the following historical illustrations.

† From the year 1773 to 1776, confidence in the administration of that day had cost this nation 100,000*l.* in new taxes, and 440,000*l.* raised by life annuities. In 1778, confidence in the administration cost 300,000*l.* in life annuities ; a sum granted for the purpose of defence, and which produced on an alarm of invasion, one troop of horse, and half a company of invalids. In 1779 the then secretary, for the purpose of opposing a measure, for relief against the abuses of the pension list, read in this house an extract of a letter from the secretary of state in England, expressive of the determination of the then English ministry, not to increase the pension list ; confidence was placed in the administration of the day, and it cost the country 13,000*l.* in new pensions, granted by the same secretary. In April 1782, on the arrival of the principal of the new administration, confidence, in the first instance, was neither asked nor granted ; certain measures were proposed by the commons and the people, they were granted, and the country was emancipated. In 1785, confidence in the administration of that day, cost Ireland 140,000*l.* new taxes, to equalize the income and expenditure ; but the grant produced 180,000*l.* excess of expences. The same confidence cost 20,000*l.* per annum for a police establishment, which it had been proved at their bar, contributed to the violation, instead of the preservation of the peace of the metropolis. The same confidence cost the nation last year 100,000*l.* charged for buildings and gardens in the Phoenix Park ; in fine they might place near two thirds of

* This was intended to be given for the life of the Duke of Bolton. For the secretary having married a lady, to whom the bulk of the Bolton estate had been left in default of issue male of that Duke, he would cease, upon the accession of her fortune, to stand in need of that *pension*. He has for some years been in that possession, and was created Baron Bolton in 1797.

† 8 Par. Deb. p. 357.

the national debt to the account of confidence in the administration of the day. He then moved *a very long and special address to his majesty, in which the whole abuse of the pension list was gone into.

Mr.

* Viz. "That an humble address be presented to his majesty to express their inviolable attachment to his majesty's person and government, and their zeal and readiness to maintain the establishments of that kingdom, in an amount adequate to the support of his government, and the dignity of his crown.

"That having taken into their consideration the income and expenditure of the nation, they found themselves obliged by their duty to his majesty, to lay before him certain abuses and misapplications of a considerable portion of the public revenue.

"That the house, determined to put an end to the ruinous practice of running in debt, and to raise the revenues of that kingdom to an equality with the establishments, did, in the sessions of 1785, unanimously vote new taxes, estimated at 140,000*l.* per annum, and had continued these taxes in the present and intervening sessions; that the charges of the establishments, instead of being equal to the revenues, had exceeded considerably the national income in the year ending Lady-Day, 1786, and that the excess of the expences on the net revenues in the year ending Lady-Day, 1787, was 180,000*l.* That the improvident disposition of the public money in the article of pensions, was one among many other causes of that excess.

"That the list of pensions on the 1st of January, 1788, appeared to have increased to the amount of 96,289*l.* per annum, exclusive of military pensions, and charges under the head of incidents on the civil establishment, and additional salaries to sinecure offices, both of which were substantially pensions; a sum greater than the pension list of England, nearly equal to half of the charges on the civil establishment, even in its present enlarged state, and exceeding by 7000*l.* in one year, the charge of pensions on that establishment for two years, ending Lady-Day, 1757, when the commons unanimously voted that charge an improvident disposition of the revenue, an injury to the crown, and detrimental to the public.

"That the pensions placed on the civil establishment since the 24th day of February, 1784, exclusive of those granted in lieu or exchange of former pensions, which had ceased, amounted to 17,000*l.* per annum; that many of the pensions had been granted to members of that house during the pleasure of the crown, in violation of the principles of the constitution, and the honor of the House of Commons.

"That his majesty's servants in Ireland were ignorant of the causes and considerations, which induced the grants of other pensions within the above period, and amounting to a considerable sum.

"That a system of bartering pensions lately established, was become an object of universal complaint; that the pernicious consequences of that barter, extended even further than an abuse of the royal bounty, and an injury of the character of the parliament and government of that country, as it involved the practice of changing the names of persons, for whose lives pensions were formerly granted; of substituting in the place of those, who were advanced in years, the names of very young persons, and of continuing the pensions for the lives of such young persons; a
" practice

Mr. Monk Mason and the chancellor of the exchequer were the only two, who spoke in defence of the administration: they complained of the multifarious

“ practice which must effectually prevent the diminution of the present pension list, and perpetuate a charge, that was one of the greatest burdens on the establishment.

“ That at the commencement of the administration of the late lord lieutenant, the sum of 4000*l.* was added to the salary of the chief governor of that kingdom, and 2000*l.* to that of his principal secretary; that notwithstanding this increase of salaries the sum charged for one year, ending Lady-Day, 1787, as expended on buildings and gardens in the Phoenix Park, was nearly equal in amount to half the salary of the chief governor, exclusive of the charge incurred since Lady-Day, 1782, of 43,936*l.* by purchasing houses in the Park for the accommodation of the lord lieutenant and his secretary, and by paying salaries and other expences attending the Park; and to the above sums were to be added, two annuities or pensions, making together 750*l.* granted for lives, and charged on the establishment, for the purpose of completing the purchase of houses in the Park for the chief, and another secretary to the lord lieutenant.

“ That they could not refrain from expressing their apprehensions to his majesty, that the first effect produced by the liberal grant of his commons, in support of the dignity of the situation of principal secretary, would be a charge on the establishment of that kingdom, of a pension to the person who enjoyed, under the government of the late viceroy, the great and various emoluments of that office; a measure, which they deprecated as pregnant with a two-fold evil to that country; an immediate increase of the public burdens, and an established precedent for similar charges in future.

“ That they had reason to apprehend that such pension was to be so enormous as to exceed considerably the sum which, by the laws of England, could be granted to any one person for a like purpose, either at the present or any future period.

“ That the pensions granted during the period, in which he was confidential secretary, considerably exceeded the amount of those placed on the establishment during the administration of any of his predecessors, for the last twenty years.

“ That after all their efforts to restrain the gross and repeated abuses in the disposition of pensions had proved ineffectual, and their expectations from the promises of œconomy on the part of his majesty’s ministers had been uniformly frustrated, they had one certain resource in his majesty’s wisdom and justice; and they rested assured, that they should obtain relief in an instance, in which they are peculiarly the objects of his majesty’s protection, as the sole authority, under which the servants of the crown in that kingdom placed pensions on the establishment, was derived from his majesty’s letters, countersigned only by commissioners of the Treasury of England: officers, who from their situation could not be responsible to that house for their conduct in the application of the revenues of that country.

“ That united with Great Britain, by the ties of common interest as well as mutual affection, they supplicated his majesty, as the common father of his people, graciously to permit his faithful and loyal subjects of Ireland to participate in the benefits of the salutary regulations adopted in Great Britain for the reduction of public expences; and they firmly relied on his majesty’s paternal goodness, that he would not suffer his faithful subjects in that kingdom, to endure the
signal

farious mass of matter contained in the motion, which it was impossible then to answer: such a farago had never been offered to any assembly; they insisted upon the meritorious services of many on the pension list, and observed, that a large portion of the grants had been made in consequence of addresses from parliament.* In order to get rid of the question (on which ministers appeared to be the most fore) the question of adjournment was put, and carried by 103 against 40.

The last thing, which particularly arrested the attention of parliament during the session was Mr. Conolly's humane effort to relieve his poor fellow crea-

“ signal mortification of observing in the conduct of his majesty's ministers in England, continued
 “ exertions to establish a permanent system of the strictest œconomy, as far as relates to Great
 “ Britain, but of experiencing in the arrangements of the same ministers respecting Ireland, an
 “ uniform disposition to sanction unbounded profusion. Having thus, with all humble submission,
 “ in discharge of what they conceived to be their indispensable duty, laid before his majesty the
 “ state of the abuses and misapplications of a considerable portion of the public revenues, they
 “ most humbly besought his majesty for redress thereof, that he would be graciously pleased not to
 “ grant a pension exceeding the sum of 800*l.* per annum, in addition to the amount of pensions on
 “ the civil establishment, on the 21st of January, 1788, to and for the use of any one person, and
 “ that the whole amount of the pensions granted in any one year should not exceed the sum of 800*l.*
 “ until the whole pension list should be reduced to 80,000*l.* nor any pension granted after the said
 “ reduction to or for the use of any one person, which should exceed the sum of 1200*l.* per annum,
 “ except to his majesty's royal family, or on an address of either house of parliament.

“ That the abuses in the pension list had, by long acquiescence, acquired such a degree of
 “ strength as to render the many private virtues and acknowledged constitutional principles of our
 “ late viceroy, in that instance, almost inoperative and inefficacious; and they had too much rea-
 “ son to apprehend, that even the good intentions of their present chief governor would be frus-
 “ trated, unless his excellency's exertions to effectuate the system of œconomy were aided and sup-
 “ ported by his majesty's gracious and decided interference.”

Mr. Conolly most cheerfully and heartily seconded the motion, and the more because his first motion was treated with neglect, which nothing that came from him could merit, and because the law proposed by him, being a part of the British constitution, was denied to that kingdom. It was in vain for that country to seek for redress, as the same gentlemen were always consulted upon the arrival of a new viceroy and his secretary, the same measures recommended, and at any rate an indemnity granted for the past. The right honorable secretary had been informed of, and had adopted the old system of governing that country. There were gentlemen of equal knowledge, worth and integrity on that side of the house, and that kingdom could be governed at half its present expence. But as that side of the house had no other way of communicating their sentiments to government, it had gone into a true state of facts for their information, and that of the people. Facts that could be proved at their bar, not to the satisfaction, but to the mortification of the people.

* 8 Parl. Deb. p. 373.

tures by the repeal of the Hearth Tax. He had had it in his intention for two years: he had indeed last year been deterred from it, by the misconduct of several of those, who would be chiefly relieved by the repeal. He wished to give full time for considering the subject: and procuring accurate information upon it, and accordingly moved,

First. That the proper officer do lay before this house, on the first day of next session, an account of the houses, in counties at large in this kingdom, paying hearth-money, which are not of a greater value than 30s. per annum, on the full improved rent, and are inhabited by persons, who have not lands, goods, or chattels, of the value of 5*l.* in their possession.

Secondly, That the ministers or curates, and churchwardens, of the different parishes, in counties at large, in this kingdom, do on or before the first day of January next, return to the registers of the respective dioceses in this kingdom an account of all the houses, in their respective parishes, paying hearth-money, which are not of a greater value than 30s. per annum, on the full improved rent, and are inhabited by persons, who have not lands, goods, or chattels of the value of 5*l.* in their possession.

Thirdly, Ordered that a copy of this, and the above resolution, signed by the speaker of this house, be forthwith sent to the registers of the respective dioceses in this kingdom, and that said registers, immediately on the receipt thereof, do serve the ministers or curates, and churchwardens, of the different parishes, in their respective dioceses, with copies of the above resolution, and that said registers do, on the first day of next session, lay before this house, all such accounts as shall be returned to them, by ministers or curates, and churchwardens, pursuant to the above resolution, and also a list of the names of the ministers or curates, and churchwardens, whom they have served with a copy of such order, together with the names of the parishes, to which they respectively belong.*

The chancellor of the Exchequer and several gentlemen on the Treasury Bench opposed the motions: upon which Mr. Conolly observed, that he conceived the reluctance of gentlemen to have the matter investigated, proceeded from the many frauds, that would come to light in consequence of

* The motions were seconded by Mr. O'Neill, who had long employed his mind upon the subject: but had given it up in despair. Mr. O'Neill, who was afterwards raised to the peerage, was always a popular character. At present he was in the zenith of favor for the sharp rebuke he had given last session to the attorney general.

investigation; when it would appear that patronage was at the bottom of their refusal. Was it not well known, when a gentleman solicited, from the minister, a hearth-money collection, that instead of 40*l.* a year, its nominal value, that he considered it as from 1 to 200*l.* a year, and whence did that arise, but out of the plunder of the people, already too wretched, by taking indulgence money, and by afterwards taking their pot, their blanket, and at last their door, and making what return they thought proper to the public treasury. The very act itself originated in injustice, and it was continued in oppression. Gentlemen seemed to have forgotten its origin. This tax was given in England and Ireland to Charles II. in lieu of his right to wardship and marriage. The poor felt none of that oppression, they cared not whom their children married; not so the rich; but still this tax was by the rich put upon the poor. At the Revolution, in England, King William took away this tax, and substituted a window tax in the place of it; the house of a poor man there, having only six windows was exempted. Compare an English house with six windows, to an Irish house with only one hearth.

He said, that he did not even intend to take in all the houses in Ireland in this predicament, but only to exempt the lower order of people, as described in this resolution; the farmer, and many others, were well able to pay; and it would not serve them, to take off an old and stinted tax, that would not grow, and leave them open to the rapacity of ministers, who, when they might want money, would substitute a new tax, which, from its youth, might be an increasing one, the poor man (as he would afterwards prove) could not, from his means, live honestly; (he spoke of the neighbourhood of the metropolis in which he lived,) and he did not believe the poor were better off in other parts of the kingdom, except in the heart of the linen manufacturing counties. If he should prove that the poor could not live honestly upon what they earned, he should consider government, in enacting this tax, to be accessaries before the fact, in the many depredations they were obliged to commit upon their neighbours. That he did not mean to blame either that or late administrations, for that effect, but to hope that the recent one would put an end to it, especially as the circumstances of the country, as lately stated by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, were in such a prosperous way, as to have induced him to bring forward a bill for reducing the public interest of money, from six to five per cent. The whole of this obnoxious tax could be taken off, and the quantum of its produce nearly paid out of the redundancy of those taxes, that
were

were voted in 1785, which were then calculated to produce 140,000*l.* but had since produced 190,000*l.* They were voted to equalize our revenue to our expences, at the opening of a commercial treaty with Great Britain, which had failed, God rest its manes! and thank God they were then in prosperity with a free trade, as undefined as the prerogative, and he hoped it would thrive as well.

He then stated the preamble of the act of William and Mary, upon the repeal of the hearth money tax in England. It was declared therein, to be “not only a great oppression to the poorer sort, but a badge of slavery upon the whole people; exposing every man’s house to be entered into, and searched at pleasure, by persons unknown to him;” and therefore to erect a lasting monument of his majesty’s goodness in every house in the kingdom, the duty of hearth-money was taken away and abolished. Now, if King William did this for his English subjects, why should not his present majesty erect a lasting monument of his goodness in every poor man’s house in Ireland? Were his majesty, said Mr. Conolly, thoroughly and honestly informed of the situation of our poor countrymen, he would willingly stand their friend. They were sufficiently taxed by their situation in life; they procured bread for the community, and fought the battles of their country. If they could not pay the tax out of their honest earnings, as an account of their expences in living would prove, he hoped the tax upon them would be abolished.*

So,

* Mr. Conolly then submitted to the house the following statement of a poor man’s necessary subsistence through the year.

One man consumes		Sum.		
<i>Per day.</i>	<i>In the year.</i>	<i>Price.</i>	<i>l.</i>	<i>s. d.</i>
7 lb. of potatoes	7 bar. 12 <i>ft.</i>	at 5 <i>s.</i> per bar.	1	18 0
1 oz. of butter	22lb. 13 oz.	at 6 <i>d.</i> per lb.	11	4 $\frac{1}{2}$
1-12th part of a stone of oatén meal	} 3 cwt. 6 <i>jl.</i> 1 <i>pottle.</i>	at 11 <i>s.</i> per cwt.	2	1 9 $\frac{1}{2}$
3 pints of butter-milk		at 1 <i>d.</i> for 3 quarts	15	4 $\frac{1}{4}$
Salt	-	-	1	0
1 kish of turf per week, 40 kishes	-	at 18 <i>d.</i> per kish	3	0 0
House rent	-	-	1	2 9
Clothing	-	-	16	0
			<hr/>	
			10	6 2 $\frac{1}{4}$

So warmly did Mr. Conolly press this matter upon the opposite side of the house, that he said, conscious that he was right, he pledged himself to persevere to the last hour of his life, as long as he should have a seat in that house, when he could no longer speak standing, he would throw out his feeble voice from his seat to emancipate his poor fellow-creatures and countrymen from a tax so oppressive to them, and so disgraceful to the government that continued to enforce it. Such, however, was the influence against the motion, that it was negatived without a division.

On the 20th of March, the speaker, on presenting the money bills, made the following speech to the lord-lieutenant :

“ MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,

“ THE Commons of Ireland, in the year 1785, made a great and spirited effort, by a large increase of taxes, to form a steady system for the annual supply of the public expence.

“ Such a system, desirable in all countries, and at all times, is particularly necessary to a commercial state, where the prospect of new loans must induce fluctuations in the price of money, injurious to the steady course of trade.

“ It was happily adopted here; and this is the third successive session in which the national debt has not been increased by any new loan, nor has any new tax been imposed.

“ Thus the system has answered ; it seems settled, and the people confide in it. Under its influence, public credit has risen high; and private credit, unawed by any fear of interference from the nation's borrowing, extends itself with safety to encourage industry, promote enterprise, and enlarge the

Labourer's means of subsistence.

Labourers at 7d. and 8d. per day, the average	}	l. s. d.		
7½d. deducting 52 Sundays and 10 holidays,		9	9	4½
the amount for 303 working days comes to				
Balance against the poor man	—		16	10½
			<hr/>	<hr/>
			10	6 2½

He said, one kish of turf per week, will scarcely allow of the necessary saving towards supplying a fire to boil the potatoes, and bake the griddle bread, during the twelve weeks in summer left out of this calculation.

Neither beer or meat are allowed the poor man in the above account, because he cannot purchase them.

“ commercial

“ commercial capital: manufactures have in consequence been extended,
 “ our exports increased, and the kingdom feels a prosperity unknown in any
 “ former time.

“ Such are the happy effects of liberal supplies wisely administered; and the
 “ commons, sensible of those effects, do now, with the most dutiful zeal for his
 “ majesty’s service, and with the fullest confidence in your excellency’s expe-
 “ rienced wisdom and affectionate attachment to this kingdom, grant the same
 “ supplies in the bills I have the honor to present to your excellency, in their
 “ name, for the royal assent.”

On the 14th of April, Mr. Grattan, with that undaunted perseverance so peculiar to himself, returned once more to the subject of tithes, and submitted to the house a string of resolutions, which he meant to move regularly in the course of the ensuing session. In doing this, his wish was to have the great principles of redress thoroughly considered; and particularly that these propositions should be submitted to, and maturely weighed by the church, as the foundation of future bills, to stand the sentiments of the commons, and to be (if these sentiments should be resisted by a right reverend bench) their acquittal and justification to the public. He followed up each resolution with a most impressive comment.* Nothing else of an interesting nature came

* 8 Parl. Debates, p. 445, &c. The resolutions were so far opposed by the secretary of state, as to keep them out of the journals, though he, and the other gentlemen on the Treasury bench, who spoke on the occasion, did not pretend to controvert the principles. The resolutions were as follows:

“ I. *Resolved*, That it would greatly encourage the improvement of barren lands in Ireland, if
 “ said lands, for a certain time after being reclaimed, were exempt from the payment of tithes.

“ II. *Resolved*, That a domestic supply of flax is an object, to which all his majesty’s subjects of
 “ Ireland should contribute.

“ III. That this house greatly contributed to said object by various bounties, but that the
 “ linen manufacture had only flourished in those parts of the kingdom, where a total exemption
 “ from, or a small composition for the tithe of flax has existed.

“ IV. *Resolved*, That in order to extend the linen manufacture, said exemption or composition
 should be made general.

“ V. *Resolved*, That potatoes are the principal subsistence of the poor in Ireland, and are, in a
 great part of the kingdom, most fortunately exempt from tithe.

“ VI. *Resolved*, That it would much contribute to relieve the poor of the south of this king-
 “ dom, if the benefit of said exemption were extended to them; and that if it should be made to ap-
 “ pear that the owners of tithe should suffer thereby, that house would make them just compensa-
 “ tion.

“ VII.

came before parliament during that session : it was prorogued on the 14th of April, 1788, to the astonishment of the nation. The natural quickness of their sensations was accelerated by disappointment, when they found, that all that was done relative to tithes was, to provide for the clergy what some of them had lost by retention of the tithes in the two preceding years, and to secure to them for ever a tithe of hemp of 5s. per acre. The failure in every popular attempt of the patriots, went but a little way to soothe the ruffled minds of the distressed peasantry in the provinces, or of the middling and higher orders in the metropolis and large towns. Notwithstanding the increase of peace officers under the police bill, it was sarcastically observed, that his excellency had the peace and tranquillity of the country deeply at heart, for that, upon the slightest appearance of interruption, he was sure to call in the aid of the military. It is incident to human nature, to see the various events of the day through the medium of that disposition, with which the spectator is at the time affected; and as the public mind had not as yet debarrailed itself of all the prejudices, prepossessions, and resentment, which the successive influence, triumph, and degradation of the volunteers, had produced; and as the police, and other late measures of government, were directly calculated to extinguish that spirit in the people, out of which the volunteer army, and all the consequent benefits had arisen to the nation, it was impossible, that the army should not have been considered useless for internal regulation, or viewed with an eye of jealousy or disgust by those, who, in their absence, had preserved the peace, and worked the happiness and welfare of their country. Great jealousy, foreboding, and irritation, manifested themselves throughout the kingdom, on the report of a plan for multiplying barracks, and surrounding the island with a military cordon for the preventing of smuggling : buildings, in the nature of guard-houses, were to be erected on the coast, at the distance of ten miles from each other, with a guard of twelve men and a serjeant to each. The present system of government could not be successfully carried on without extraordinary countenance to the army on one side, and stronger checks,

“ VII. *Resolved*, That that house would be ready to relieve the owners of tithes from the necessity of drawing the same; and to give said owners a power of recovering the value of the same, in all cases, by civil bill, or otherwise, provided said owners of tithe should conform to certain rates to be ascertained by act of parliament.

“ VIII. *Resolved*, That the better to secure the residence of the clergy, a moderate tax on non-residents would be expedient.”

than

than what were perhaps prudent, upon the constitutional rights of the people, on the other. The feelings of the people without were in strict unison with the sentiments of the patriots within the walls of parliament; and the lord-lieutenant finding himself pressed by the weight of talent, influence, and popularity of those, who had ranged themselves in opposition to his measures, got rid of them by an early prorogation, that he might busy himself without interruption, in his favorite subaltern system of æconomical reform.

Animated with a laudable indignation against the rapacious and bare-faced practices of the clerks, and other subaltern officers in the different fiscal departments of government, he seized all* their keys, examined himself their papers and accounts, and subjected them to the most rigorous scrutiny, and demanded instant payment of outstanding balances. An universal panic seized the whole; many defaulters fled the country, others cut their throats, and some few, relying on the sympathies and countenance of their immediate superiors in office, stood the brunt of the enquiry, and, either eluded by dexterity, or softened by false promises the anger of their indignant governor. Some few were ultimately dismissed with disgrace. In these secondary departments nothing was so minute, which the scrutinizing eye of his excellency would not descend to inspect. The profligacy of official profusion was truly incredible: peculation reigned in every department where public money was handled, or public property disposeable: the public accounts were wound up yearly with formidable items for balances in the hands of collectors, treasurers, and pay-masters, or arrears due by former great officers who had received their employments without security, or had been discarded for misconduct, or were dead, or had fled, or become bankrupt. Such was the inveteracy of this disease, that each succeeding viceroy, on close inspection, was afraid to touch it; until the Marquis of Buckingham, with more courage or more temerity than his predecessors, ventured to upset the hornets' hive, and develop the wicked workings of these official peculators. In the ordnance and treasury, the grossest frauds pervaded almost every department. The public stores were plundered with impunity in the open day. The arms, ammunition, and military accoutrements, condemned as useless, were stolen out at one gate, and bought in at the other, as purchased, and charged anew to the public account. Journeymen armourers, who worked in the arsenal, seldom went

* When Mr. Corry was made surveyor of the ordnance, his first act, was to lock up and seal the desks of the several clerks, who were dismissed instantly.

home to their meals without conveying away a musket, sword, or brace of pistols, as lawful perquisites; and sanctioned by the connivance of their superiors. Clerks in subordinate departments, with salaries of 100*l.* per annum, or less, kept handsome houses in town and country, with splendid establishments; some of them became purchasers of loans and lotteries: all exhibited signs of redundant opulence.

In the course of the year 1788, the county of Armagh was disturbed by the increased animosity and outrages of the Peep of Day Boys, and Defenders. These two sets had been advancing in numbers, system, and ferocity, ever since the year 1785: they arose, like many other considerable and tumultuary sets or denominations of men, from mere accident. An altercation took place between two peasants, who happened to be Presbyterians: amongst the spectators of the affray, was a Roman Catholic, who took a part with one of the combatants: at which the other swore perpetual vengeance: this spirit of difference was kept up, and the neighbours began to take a part with the original combatants, according to their intimacies of friendship: the spirit of discord spread from families to villages: they embodied and called themselves fleets, and went out to meet and fight each other: hitherto they knew no other difference or distinction, than that of their villages or townships; which, from their names, they called the Nappack fleet, and the Bawn fleet: a third set, living about Bunker's-hill, between Newry and Armagh, associated to defend themselves against the Nappack fleet, and calling themselves defenders joined the Bawn fleet. Many on both sides were armed: and as far back as 1785, near a thousand men on both sides met for a regular engagement, which was fortunately prevented by some gentlemen of property, who had been apprized of their intentions. When once associations of this sort have formed themselves into bodies, it is impossible that the spirit of discord, or revenge, or even frolic, should not carry them beyond their original intentions and lead them into new mischief, arising out of the fortuitous circumstances of their unguarded warmth. In this part of the country, the religious division of the population was different from most other districts in Ireland: the Protestants were the more numerous, and of these the greater part were Presbyterians. As the discord and animosity increased, some accidental differences about religion blew up a religious dissention amidst both parties: and, in process of time, they formed into a new division, and enlisted under the opposite banners of the Protestant and Catholic religions. Of all grounds of dissention

tions, religion is ever the most inveterate, and most to be dreaded. A tumultuary spirit had so long pervaded these unfortunate people, that as they had once armed and arrayed themselves for combat, they would not it seems part or disarm without fighting. This new marshalling of their whole force soon gave rise to different appellations: for the Protestants taking advantage of the laws against Papists having arms, paid their antagonists very early domiciliary visits to search for arms, in which they were often guilty of the most wanton outrages; they acquired the appellation of *Peep of Day Boys*: whilst the others assumed that of *Defenders*. The consequence of this new division of parties was, that their mutual ferocity increased, and frequent rencounters terminated in blood. Certain it is, that by timely and vigorous exertions of government, this spirit of dissension and outrage might have been at any time subdued and extinguished: but unfortunately the unhappy differences were permitted to be fomented by gentlemen of the country for electioneering or other worse purposes. Hence the fatal origin of defenderism.

Either for the purpose or under the pretence of checking this spirit of turbulence and outrage, in this year recourse again was had to the raising of some volunteer corps, by way of strengthening, as it was said, the arm of the civil magistrate. It was not in the nature of things, that these volunteer corps, into which they refused to admit any Catholic, should not be more obnoxious to the defenders, than to the *Peep of Day Boys*: for although they should not have shewn favor or affection to any description of men disturbing the public tranquillity, yet it was the first part of their duty to disarm the defenders (being Papists), and in their arms had they for some time found their only safety and defence against their antagonists. Some occasional conflicts happened both between the *Defenders* and *Peep of Day Boys*, and between the *Defenders* and the *Volunteers*. As a corps of volunteers in going to church at Armagh passed by a Catholic chapel, a quarrel arose with some of the congregation, and stones were thrown at the volunteers. After service, instead of avoiding the repetition of insult by taking another route, the volunteers procured arms, returned to the spot, and a conflict ensued, in which they killed some of the Catholic congregation. In consequence of these rencounters, and the defenders procuring and retaining what fire arms they could, the Earl of Charlemont, governor of the county, and the grand jury, published a manifesto against all Papists, who should assemble in arms, and also against any person, who should attempt to disarm them without legal authority.

city. In addition to these efforts, some of the *Peep of Day Boys* fought also to disarm their antagonists by means of the law: they accordingly indicted some of the defenders at the summer assizes of 1788; but Baron Hamilton quashed the indictments, and dismissed both parties with an impressive exhortation to live in peace and brotherly love. The *Defenders* about this time were charged with openly sending challenges both to the *Peep of Day Boys* and the volunteers to meet them in the field: the fact was, that the defenders certainly did look upon them both as one common enemy combined to defeat and oppress them: whilst therefore this open hostility between the two parties subsisted and rankled under the daily festering fore of religious acrimony, the defenders, who knew themselves armed against law, though in self-defence against the *Peep of Day Boys*, became the more anxious to bring their antagonists to an open trial of strength, rather than remain victims to the repeated outrages of their domiciliary visits, or other attempts to disarm them. Thus a private squabble between two peasants gradually swelled into a village brawl, and ended in the religious war of a whole district. Some symptoms of renovated disturbances also broke out in the south. The prorogation of parliament, without having administered any relief to their grievances, was not likely to increase or spread amongst them a spirit of content or gratitude.

We now approach the period of Irish history, pregnant with those awful circumstances, which it has lately been the study, affectation, or rage of modern writers to connect with the late Irish rebellion in whatever manner it best suited their views, interests, or passions: and as the incorporate union of the two kingdoms followed so closely upon the heels of that rebellion, it becomes the historian's duty to conduct his reader by an uninterrupted chain of facts to that eventful period of union, which it is the wish of every loyal subject of his majesty may, as it certainly ought to be productive of accumulative and permanent prosperity to the British empire. Whoever has lived to see and reflect impartially upon the awful effects of the last twelve years in the political turns of human government, will allow the superior necessity, at the present above any former period, of ascribing effects to their real causes. Inattention to this transcendent duty of the statesman in Ireland, appears to have been immediately productive of many of those disasters, which the tears of a century will not efface.

From the year 1779, when Lord Clare tells us, that *the imbecility of Lord*
Bucking-

Buckinghamshire's government had arrayed the volunteer army, the whole Irish nation had been successively seized with a spirit of civil freedom and independence, which had not been felt, or at least had not been shewn for several preceding centuries. We have traced that spirit through its several gradations to its zenith: and when by its undaunted perseverance it had procured all it demanded in 1782, we have observed it at first disjointed by internal difference, and when weakened by division, we have seen it bought up or worked down by all the allurements, power, and influence of government. From the recal of the Duke of Portland, every measure of government had a tendency to extinguish the national spirit, to which alone the legislative independence of Ireland was owing. The defection of the members from the general popularity of their sentiments in 1782, was at first rapid with the change of administration in all those, who systematically supported the minister of the day. These numerically secured a majority: but the great landed interests of the country remained for a time staunch to the principles, by which their country had become free and independent: with them lay the weight of property, of talent, and natural influence over all that part of the nation, which had not bartered their freedom for emolument or lucre. Although the minister commanded considerably more than two thirds out of the three hundred votes in the commons, yet so hardly were they pressed by the minority, both as to the popularity of the subjects brought under the discussion of parliament, and the superior abilities, with which they were urged, that the lord lieutenant almost indecently curtailed the duration of the session, to the great dissatisfaction of the minority within and the majority out of parliament. Mr. Yelverton's bill and all the transactions in the year 1782 had been adopted upon the genuine principles of Whiggism, which the Duke of Portland at that time professed, and every true friend of the Marquis of Rockingham practised.

In the autumn of this year, it was the will of Heaven to visit the British empire with a most distressful calamity. A circumstance, which placed Ireland in a more peculiar delicacy of situation, than any other part of the empire. Soon after the recess of the British parliament in the middle of July, 1788, the king, who had been for some time rather indisposed, was advised by his physicians to try the mineral waters of Cheltenham, which seemed to promise the re-establishment of his health. During his residence there, his majesty amused himself and gratified his people by various excursions in the

vicinity of that place, displaying on these occasions much condescension and affability, and being every where received with extraordinary demonstrations of joy. On his return to Windsor, his illness returned with new and alarming symptoms; and in the month of October it was generally rumoured, that the malady of the king was of a nature peculiarly afflicting. It was however the natural wish of the court, that it should not be credited by the public, earlier than the dreadful necessity required. On the 24th of October there was a levee at St. James's, for the purpose of quieting the alarm, which the report of his indisposition had spread amongst the people; but upon his return to Windsor, his disorder took a new and unfortunate turn; and before the end of the first week in November it was generally known, that it had settled in a delirium. The grief and consternation, which this intelligence excited amongst all ranks of his affectionate subjects could only be equalled by the joy they so conspicuously manifested at his happy recovery. The Prince of Wales repaired immediately to Windsor, where he was met by the lord chancellor; they, in concert with the queen, took such measures relative to the domestic affairs of the king, as the necessity of the case required. In the mean time all those, who by their rank and situation in the state were required to take a part in so new and unexpected an exigence, assembled in the capital; and an express was dispatched to Mr. Fox, at that time on the continent, to hasten his return.*

The parliament then stood prorogued to the 20th of November; and as the intended commission for a further prorogation had not been issued by the king, its meeting took place upon that day, as a matter of course.† The peers and the commons remained in their separate chambers; and the chancellor in the lords, and Mr. Pitt in the commons, having notified the cause of their assembling without the usual notice and summons, and stated the impropriety of their proceeding under such circumstances to the discussion of any public business whatsoever, both houses resolved unanimously to adjourn for fifteen days. At the same time Mr. Pitt took occasion to observe, that it would be indispensably necessary, in case his majesty's illness should unhappily continue longer than the period of their adjournment, that the house should

* Mr. Fox was at this time on the borders of Italy; and the fatigue of travelling incessantly night and day, in order to return in time, seriously affected his health.

† 25 Parl. Deb. p. 2.

take into immediate consideration the means of supplying, as far as they were competent, the want of the royal presence; it was incumbent upon them to ensure a full attendance, in order to give every possible weight and solemnity to their proceedings. For this purpose it was ordered, that the house should be called over on Thursday the 4th of December next, and that the speaker should send letters requiring the attendance of every member. Orders to the same effect were made by the lords.

In order to lay some ground for the proceeding of the two houses of parliament, a council was holden at Whitehall on the day preceding their meeting, to which all the privy counsellors were summoned. Of fifty-four who attended, twenty-four were of the party of opposition. The physicians,* who had attended his majesty during his illness, were called before them and sworn; after which three questions, which had been previously debated and carried in the council, were put to them severally. The first was, "Whether his majesty's indisposition rendered him incapable of meeting his parliament, and of attending to any sort of public business?" To this they answered, "That certainly he was incapable." The second was, "What was their opinion of the duration of his majesty's malady, and of the probability of a cure?" To this they answered, "That there was a great probability of his recovery, but that it was impossible to limit the time." The third question was, "Did they give that opinion from the particular symptoms of his majesty's disorder, or from their experience in complaints of a similar nature?" To this their general answer was, "That it was from experience, and having observed, that the majority of those, who were afflicted with the same disease, had recovered."

On the 4th the two houses being assembled, the president of the council informed the peers, that the king, by the continuance of his indisposition, was rendered incapable of meeting his parliament, and that all the other functions of government were thereby suspended. He then declared it to be his opinion, that in that dismembered state of the legislature, the right devolved on the two houses of parliament to make such provision for supplying the defect as should be adequate to the necessity of the case; but that it was

* The physicians were Sir George Baker, Sir Lucas Pepys, Dr. Addington, and Dr. Reynolds; of whom Dr. Addington was the most sanguine in his hopes of his majesty's recovery, as he had seldom or ever known cases attended by such symptoms as he had discovered in his majesty's fall of a happy termination. 25 Par. Deb. p. 3.

necessary,

neceſſary, before any ſtep could be taken in ſo delicate a buſineſs, that the deficiency ſhould be fully aſcertained : with this view he moved, that the minutes of the privy council ſhould be read ; which being done, the following Monday was appointed for taking it into conſideration.

A motion to the ſame effect being made by Mr. Pitt in the Houſe of Commons, Mr. Viner expreſſed his doubt, whether, in a matter of ſuch moment, and which would be attended with ſuch important conſequences, the houſe could proceed upon a report from the privy council, without further examination of the phyſicians, either at their bar, or by a committee of their own. Mr. Pitt urged, in reply, the delicacy to be diſcuſſed ; and remarked further, that the examination was taken upon oath, which the houſe had it not in their power to adminiſter. Mr. Fox concurred in opinion with Mr. Viner ; he felt the propriety of acting with all poſſible delicacy ; but if delicacy and their duty ſhould happen to claſh, the latter ought not to be ſacrificed to the former.

On Monday the 8th of December Mr. Pitt, either convinced, upon further conſideration, of the propriety of Mr. Viner's ſuggeſtion, or expecting that the probability of his majeſty's recovery would become more apparent upon a fuller enquiry into the caſe, came forward to propoſe, that a committee of twenty-one members ſhould be appointed to examine all the phyſicians, who attended the king during his illneſs. A like committee was appointed the ſame day in the Houſe of Lords ; and the members in both were choſen nearly in equal numbers from each ſide of the houſe.

The report of the committee being brought up on the 10th, and ordered to be printed, Mr. Pitt moved, “ that a committee be appointed to examine “ the Journals of the houſe, and report precedents of ſuch proceedings as “ may have been had in caſes of the perſonal exerciſe of the royal authority “ being prevented or interrupted by infancy, ſickneſs, infirmity, or other- “ wiſe, with a view to provide for the ſame.” Mr. Fox objected to the motion as nugatory, and productive of unneceſſary and improper delay. The right hon. gentleman knew, that no precedent was to be found of the ſuſpence of the executive government, in which, at the ſame time, there exiſted an heir apparent to the crown, of full age and capacity. For his part, he was convinced, upon the matureſt conſideration of the principles and practice of the conſtitution, and of the analogy of the common law of the land, that whenever the ſovereign, from ſickneſs, infirmity, or other incapacity, was unable

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to exercise the functions of his high office, the heir apparent, being of full age and capacity, had as indisputable a claim to the exercise of the executive power, in the name and on behalf of the sovereign, during the continuance of such incapacity, as in the case of his natural demise. And as to the right, which he conceived the Prince of Wales had, he was not himself to judge when he was entitled to exercise it; but the two houses of parliament, as the organs of the nation, were alone qualified to pronounce when the prince ought to take possession of it, and exercise his right. He thought it candid, entertaining this opinion, to come forward fairly, and avow it at that instant; and therefore, under such an idea, he conceived, that as short a time as possible ought to intervene between the Prince of Wales's assuming the sovereignty, and the present moment. He justified the prince's not making this his indubitable claim himself, by imputing his desire of waving the open advancement of it, to his having been bred in those principles, which had placed his illustrious house on the throne, and to his known reverence and regard for those principles, as the true fundamentals of our glorious constitution, in the maintenance of which, his family had flourished with so much prosperity and happiness, as sovereigns of the British empire. Hence it was, that his Royal Highness chose rather to wait the decision of parliament, with a patient and due deference to the constitution, than to urge a claim, that, he trusted, a majority of that house, and of the people at large, admitted; and which, he was persuaded, could not be reasonably disputed. With regard to the examination of the physicians, three points formed the result, and must be the *substratum*, on which that house would necessarily raise the superstructure, whatever it might be, that they should deem it expedient to erect.

1. That his majesty was incapable of meeting his parliament, or proceeding to business.

2. That there was a great prospect, and a strong probability, of his recovery.

3. But that with respect to the point of time, when that recovery would take place, they were left in absolute doubt and uncertainty.

Mr. Pitt observed, that if a claim of right were intimated (even though not formally) on the part of the Prince of Wales, to assume the government, it became of the utmost consequence to ascertain, from precedent and history, whether that claim were founded; which, if it were, precluded the house from
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the possibility of all deliberation on the subject. In the mean time he maintained, that it would appear, from every precedent, and from every page of our history, that to assert such a right in the Prince of Wales, or any one else, independent of the decision of the two houses of parliament, was little less than treason to the constitution of the country. He pledged himself to this assertion, that in the case of the interruption of the personal exercise of the royal authority, without any previous lawful provision having been made for carrying on the government, it belonged to the other branches of the legislature, on the part of the nation at large, the body they represented, to provide, according to their direction, for the temporary exercise of the royal authority, in the name, and on the behalf, of the sovereign, in such manner as they should think requisite; and that, unless by their decision, the Prince of Wales had no right, (speaking of strict right) to assume the government, more than any other individual subject of the country. What parliament ought to determine on that subject, was a question of discretion. However strong the arguments might be on that ground, in favor of the Prince of Wales, which he would not enter into at that time, it did not affect the question of right; because, neither the whole, nor any part, of the royal authority could belong to him in the present circumstances, unless conferred by the houses of parliament.

The exclusive right of the prince to the regency under the physical inability of his royal father, was strenuously and ingeniously supported in both houses by the gentlemen of the opposition, and warmly and ably opposed by the ministerial members. Although on this great and important occasion the number of the former were considerably increased: yet the minister was secure on every question of a majority of upwards of three score in the Commons, and of a larger proportion of the House of Lords. Lord Loughborough, who on this occasion assumed the lead of opposition in the peers, amongst other arguments in support of the prince's inherent right, strongly urged, the inconveniency and mischief, which might arise from the contrary doctrine, when it should come to be acted upon by the independent kingdom of Ireland. Was it remembered, said his lordship,* that a neighbouring kingdom stood connected with us, and acknowledged allegiance to the British crown. If once the rule of regular succession were departed from by

* 26 Par. Deb. Lords. p. 20.

the two houses, how were they sure, that the neighbouring kingdom would acknowledge the regent, whom the two houses would take upon themselves to elect. The probability was, that the neighbouring kingdom would depart, in consequence of our departure, from the rule of hereditary succession, and choose a regent of their own, which must lead to endless confusion and embarrassment.*

As it was evident from the complexion of both houses of parliament, that the majority was against the claim of the Prince of Wales's strict right to the regency, it was thought most adviseable, by those who held the affirmative, to avoid, if possible, its being brought to a formal decision. With this view, on the 15th of December, Earl Fitzwilliam, after stating the inexpediency of bringing under the present circumstances, any abstract political questions into discussion, when all parties were agreed in substance, desired to know from the ministers, whether they meant to introduce any proposition of that nature. He was answered by Earl Camden, that as the most essential rights of the two houses of parliament had been questioned by persons of great and respectable authority, he thought it was become absolutely necessary, that they should not be left doubtful and unsettled. Upon this declaration, his Royal Highness the Duke of York rose to express his sentiments on a subject, in which the dearest interests of the country were involved. He entirely agreed with the noble Earl (Fitzwilliam) and other lords, who had expressed their wishes to avoid any question, which tended to induce a discussion on the rights of the prince. The fact was plain, that no such claim of right had been made on the part of the prince; and he was confident, that his royal highness understood too well the sacred principles, which seated the house of Brunswick on the throne of Great Britain, ever to assume or exercise any power, be his claim what it might, not derived from the will of the people, expressed by their representatives and their lordships in parliament assembled. It was upon that ground that he must be permitted to hope, that the wisdom and moderation of all considerable men, at

* In answer to this part of Lord Loughborough's speech, Lord Chancellor (Thurlow) lamented, that any remarks should have fallen from the noble and learned lord respecting Ireland, because he considered them as not unlikely; *Spargere voces in vulgum ambiguas!* Such vague and loose suggestions could answer no useful purpose, but might produce very mischievous consequences. He declared, that he had every reliance on the known loyalty, good sense, and affection of that country, and felt no anxiety on the danger of Ireland's acting improperly.

a moment when temper and unanimity were so peculiarly necessary, on account of the dreadful calamity which every description of persons must, in common, lament, but which he more particularly felt, would make them wish to avoid pressing a decision, which certainly was not necessary to the great object expected from parliament, and which must be most painful in the discussion to a family already sufficiently agitated and afflicted. Such, his royal highness observed, in conclusion, were the sentiments of an honest heart, equally influenced by duty and affection to his royal father, and by attachment to the constitutional rights of his subjects: and he was confident, that if his royal brother were to address them in his place, as a peer of the realm, these were the sentiments, which he would distinctly avow.

He was followed by his Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester, who strongly deprecated the discussion of a question, which could only tend to produce the most mischievous consequences. He felt so strongly on the subject, that, if the attempt were persisted in, and the question brought before that house, he could only say, that he believed he should not dare to trust himself to come forward and speak his sentiments on the extraordinary conduct of those, who were unnecessarily inclined to compel a decision on so delicate a question.

Notwithstanding the entreaties of the princes of the royal family, the ministers persevered in their intention; and the lord chancellor closed the conversation by declaring, that though he much lamented the starting of such a question, yet he did not see how they could now avoid coming to some determination upon it.

On the 16th of December, the House of Commons having resolved itself into a committee, Mr. Pitt moved the three following resolutions, the first of which was voted unanimously.

“ 1. That it is the opinion of this committee, that his majesty is prevented, by his present indisposition, from coming to his parliament, and from attending to public business; and that the personal exercise of the royal authority is thereby, for the present, interrupted.”

“ 2. That it is the opinion of this committee, that it is the right and duty of the lords, spiritual and temporal, and commons of Great Britain, now assembled, and lawfully and freely representing all the estates of the people of this realm, to provide the means of supplying the defect of the personal exercise of the royal authority, arising from his majesty's said indisposition,

“ position, in such manner, as the exigency of the case may appear to require.”

“ 3. *Resolved*, that for this purpose, and for maintaining entire the constitutional authority of the king, it is necessary, that the said lords spiritual and temporal and commons of Great Britain, should determine on the means, whereby the royal assent may be given in parliament to such bill, as may be passed by the two houses of parliament, respecting the exercise of the powers and authorities of the crown, in the name, and on the behalf of the king, during the continuance of his majesty’s present indisposition.”

These resolutions passed the commons after several vehement debates, by a majority of 64: and were carried in the lords by 99 against 66. On the 29th of December, 1788, the illness of the speaker (Mr. Cornwall, of which he died on the 2d of January, 1789,) prevented his attendance in the commons, and there was no debate for some days. During this interval from parliamentary business, Mr. Pitt, on the 29th of December, 1788, wrote* to his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales the following letter, concerning the plan of restrictions intended to be put upon the regency.

“ SIR,

“ THE proceedings in parliament being now brought to a point, which will render it necessary to propose to the House of Commons, the particular measures to be taken for supplying the defect of the personal exercise of the royal authority, during the present interval, and your royal highness having some time since signified your pleasure, that any communication on this subject should be in writing, I take the liberty of respectfully entreating your royal highness’s permission, to submit to your consideration the outlines of the plan, which his majesty’s confidential servants humbly conceive (according to the best judgment which they are able to form) to be proper to be proposed in the present circumstances.

“ It is their humble opinion, that your royal highness should be empowered to exercise the royal authority in the name and on the behalf of his majesty, during his majesty’s illness, and to do all acts which might legal-

* Some awkward misrepresentations of what had passed at one of the meetings, between his royal highness and the premier, having gone abroad, his royal highness had from that time declined any personal interview with the minister, and had expressed his royal pleasure, that any future communications should be in writing.

“ ly be done by his majesty ; with provisions, nevertheless, that the care of
 “ his majesty’s royal person, and the management of his majesty’s house-
 “ hold, and the direction and appointment of the officers and servants there-
 “ in should be in the queen under such regulations, as may be thought ne-
 “ cessary. That the power to be exercised by your royal highness should not
 “ extend to the granting the real or personal property of the king (except
 “ as far as relates to the renewal of leases), to the granting any office in
 “ reversion, or to the granting, for any other term than during his majes-
 “ ty’s pleasure, any pension, or any office whatever, except such as must by
 “ law be granted for life, or during good behaviour ; nor to the granting
 “ any rank or dignity of the peerage of this realm to any person, except
 “ his majesty’s issue, who shall have attained the age of 21 years.

“ These are the chief points, which have occurred to his majesty’s servants.
 “ I beg leave to add, that their ideas are formed on the supposition, that
 “ his majesty’s illness is only temporary, and may be of no long duration.
 “ It may be difficult to fix before hand, the precise period, for which these
 “ provisions ought to last ; but if unfortunately his majesty’s recovery should
 “ be protracted to a more distant period, than there is reason at present to
 “ imagine, it will be open hereafter to the wisdom of parliament, to recon-
 “ sider these provisions whenever the circumstances appear to call for it.

“ If your royal highness should be pleased to require any farther explana-
 “ tion on the subject, and should condescend to signify your orders, that I
 “ should have the honor of attending your royal highness for that purpose,
 “ or to intimate any other mode, in which your royal highness may wish to
 “ receive such explanation, I shall respectfully wait your royal highness’s
 “ commands.

“ I have the honor to be,

“ With the utmost deference and submission,

“ SIR,

“ Your royal highness’s

Downing-street, Tuesday night,

December 30, 1788.

“ Most dutiful and devoted servant,

“ W. PITT.”

To this letter his royal highness wrote the following answer, which he de-
 livered to the lord chancellor, January 1, 1789.

“ The Prince of Wales learns from Mr. Pitt’s letter, that the proceedings
 “ in parliament are now in a train, which enables Mr. Pitt, according to the
 “ intima-

“ intimation in his former letter, to communicate to the Prince the outlines
“ of the plan, which his majesty’s confidential servants conceive to be proper
“ to be proposed in the present circumstances.

“ Concerning the steps already taken by Mr. Pitt, the Prince is silent.
“ Nothing done by the two houses of parliament can be a proper subject of
“ his animadversion; but when, previously to any discussion in parliament,
“ the outlines of a scheme of government are sent for his consideration, in
“ which it is proposed, that he shall be personally and principally concerned,
“ and by which the royal authority, and the public welfare may be deeply
“ affected, the Prince would be unjustifiable, were he to withhold an explicit
“ declaration of his sentiments. His silence might be construed into a previous
“ approbation of a plan, the accomplishment of which every motive
“ of duty to his father and sovereign, as well as of regard for the public
“ interest, obliges him to consider as injurious to both.

“ In the state of deep distress, in which the Prince and the whole royal
“ family were involved by the heavy calamity, which has fallen upon the
“ king, and at a moment when government deprived of its chief energy and
“ support, seemed peculiarly to need the cordial and united aid of all descriptions
“ of good subjects, it was not expected by the Prince, that a plan
“ should be offered to his consideration, by which government was to be
“ rendered difficult, if not impracticable, in the hands of any person intended
“ to represent the king’s authority, much less in the hands of his eldest
“ son, the heir apparent of his kingdoms, and the person most bound to the
“ maintenance of his majesty’s just prerogatives and authority, as well as
“ most interested in the happiness, the prosperity, and the glory of the
“ people.

“ The Prince forbears to remark on the several parts of the sketch of the
“ plan laid before him; he apprehends it must have been formed with sufficient
“ deliberation to preclude the probability of any argument of his producing
“ an alteration of sentiment in the projectors of it. But he trusts,
“ with confidence, to the wisdom and justice of parliament, when the whole
“ of this subject, and the circumstances connected with it, shall come under
“ their deliberation.

“ He observes, therefore, only generally on the heads communicated by
“ Mr. Pitt, and it is with deep regret the Prince makes the observation, that
“ he sees in the contents of that paper, a project for producing weakness,
“ disorder,

“ disorder, and insecurity in every branch of the administration of affairs.
 “ A project for dividing the royal family from each other, for separating the
 “ court from the state; and therefore, by disjoining government from its
 “ natural and accustomed support, a scheme for disconnecting the au-
 “ thority to command service, from the power of animating it by reward;
 “ and for allotting to the Prince all the invidious duties of government,
 “ without the means of softening them to the public by any one act of
 “ grace, favor or benignity.

“ The Prince’s feelings on contemplating this plan are also rendered still
 “ more painful to him by observing, that it is not founded on any general
 “ principle, but is calculated to inspire jealousies and suspicions (wholly
 “ groundless he trusts) in that quarter, whose confidence it will ever be the
 “ first pride of his life to merit and obtain.

“ With regard to the motive and object of the limitations and restrictions
 “ proposed, the Prince can have but little to observe. No light or infor-
 “ mation is offered him by his majesty’s ministers on these points. They
 “ have informed him what the powers are, which they mean to refuse him,
 “ not why they are withheld.

“ The Prince, however, holding as he does, that it is an undoubted and
 “ fundamental principle of this constitution, that the powers and prerogatives
 “ of the crown are vested there, as a trust for the benefit of the people; and
 “ that they are sacred only, as they are necessary to the preservation of that
 “ poise and balance of the constitution, which experience has proved to be
 “ the true security of the liberty of the subject, must be allowed to observe,
 “ that the plea of public utility ought to be strong, manifest, and urgent,
 “ which calls for the extinction or suspension of any one of those essential
 “ rights in the supreme power or its representative; or which can justify the
 “ Prince in consenting, that in his person an experiment shall be made, to
 “ ascertain with how small a portion of the kingly power the executive go-
 “ vernment of this country may be carried on.

“ The Prince has only to add, that if security for his majesty’s repossession
 “ his rightful government, whenever it shall please Providence, in bounty to
 “ the country, to remove the calamity with which he is afflicted, be any
 “ part of the object of this plan, the Prince has only to be convinced, that
 “ any measure is necessary, or even conducive to that end, to be the first

“ to

“ to urge it, as the preliminary and paramount consideration of any settlement, in which he would consent to share.

“ If attention to what is presumed might be his majesty’s feelings and wishes on the happy day of his recovery, be the object, it is with the truest sincerity the Prince expresses his firm conviction, that no event would be more repugnant to the feelings of his royal father, than the knowledge, that the government of his son and representative had exhibited the sovereign power of the realm in a state of degradation, of curtailed authority and diminished energy; a state, hurtful in practice to the prosperity and good government of his people, and injurious in its precedent to the security of the monarch, and the rights of his family.

“ Upon that part of the plan, which regards the king’s real and personal property, the Prince feels himself compelled to remark, that it was not necessary for Mr. Pitt, nor proper to suggest to the Prince, the restraint he proposes against the Prince’s granting away the king’s real and personal property. The Prince does not conceive, that, during the king’s life, he is by law entitled to make any such grant; and he is sure, that he has never shewn the smallest inclination to possess any such power. But it remains with Mr. Pitt to consider the eventual interests of the royal family, and to provide a proper and natural security against the mismanagement of them by others.

“ The Prince has discharged an indispensable duty, in thus giving his free opinion on the plan submitted to his consideration.

“ His conviction of the evils, which may arise to the king’s interests, to the peace and happiness of the royal family, and to the safety and welfare of the nation, from the government of the country remaining longer in its present maimed and debilitated state, outweighs in the Prince’s mind every other consideration, and will determine him to undertake the painful trust imposed upon him by the present melancholy necessity (which of all the king’s subjects he deploras the most) in full confidence, that the affection and loyalty to the king, the experienced attachment to the House of Brunswick, and the generosity which has always distinguished this nation, will carry him through the many difficulties, inseparable from this most critical situation, with comfort to himself, with honour to the king, and with advantage to the public.

Carleton House, Jan. 2d, 1789.

(Signed) G. P.”

On

On the 6th of January Mr. Pitt having given notice, that he should on that day propose to the house the restrictions, within which the exercise of the regal power should be granted to the regent, Mr. Loveden, the member for Abingdon, rose as soon as the order of the day was moved, and observed, that before the house proceeded to settle the terms of the regency, he conceived that they ought to know exactly the present state of his majesty's health, what the degree of alteration, which it had undergone since his majesty's physicians were last examined. This was the more necessary, as reports had gone abroad of a very contradictory kind, and the authority of the different physicians who attended his majesty had been made use of to give sanction to those reports. He therefore moved, "That the physicians, who had attended his majesty should be again examined, to inform the house whether any alteration or amendment had taken place in the state of the king's health, and if the present symptoms were such, as to give reason to hope for his majesty's speedy recovery."

This motion gave rise to a warm debate, which was managed not with the most perfect temper and moderation on either side of the house. After much altercation it was agreed, that a new committee should be appointed, and that the physicians should be examined.

The committee sat till the 13th of January, when the report was brought up, ordered to be printed, and to be taken into consideration in a committee of the whole house on the state of the nation upon the 16th of January, 1789.

On that day Mr. Pitt, after expressing his satisfaction at having consented to the motion for re-examining the physicians, the event of which had justified his former opinion respecting the probability of his majesty's recovery, proceeded to open the business, which was then to be the subject of their deliberations. The subject divided itself into three distinct heads: 1st, The nature of the king's illness. 2dly The principles, upon which the two houses were authorized to act on this occasion. And 3dly, The application of those principles to the measures, which he should propose for remedying the present defect in the personal exercise of the royal authority.

It had been determined, that the right to provide for the deficiency in the executive government devolved on the two houses of parliament; but there was abundant reason to hope, that the occasion would be temporary and short. What they had to provide for, therefore, was no more than an interval, and if
unfortunately,

unfortunately, his majesty's illness should be protracted, they might leave it to parliament to do what at present was clearly unnecessary; to consider of a more permanent plan of government. They were to provide only for the present necessity, and not to exceed it; they were also to provide against any embarrassment in the resumption of the royal authority, whenever God, in his providence, should enable the rightful holder again to exercise it. They were therefore to grant such powers, and none other, as were requisite to carry on the government of the country with energy and effect.

Upon these principles he should propose to invest the Prince of Wales with the whole royal authority, to be exercised in the name and on the behalf of the king, subject to such limitations and restrictions only as should be provided. He observed in the Succession Act of Queen Ann, and in the regency acts of George the Second and George the Third, the exercise of all the royal prerogatives were granted in a fuller manner than he intended to propose: but on the other hand, the regent, in all those cases, was fettered with a council, the consent of a majority of which was necessary to authorize his acts. Under the present circumstances he thought it more adviseable to leave the regent entirely free in the choice of his political servants; but at the same time this required some limitation of the authority, with which he was to be invested.

The first restriction he meant to propose was, that the authority of the regent should not extend to the creating any peer, except such of the royal issue as should have attained the age of twenty-one. There were three grounds, he conceived, upon which this branch of the prerogative was intrusted by the constitution to the crown, none of which were applicable to the present case. First, It was designed to enable the king to counteract the designs of any factious cabal in the House of Lords, which might have acquired a predominant influence in their deliberations. But was it at all probable that the government of his royal highness should be obstructed by any such cabal? He, for one, was ready to declare, that he should give no opposition to any administration the regent should chuse to form, so long as their measures were compatible with the prosperity of the kingdom. On the other hand, he said, such a number of peers might be created, as would considerably embarrass his majesty's government on the event of his being restored to health. Secondly, This power was vested in the crown, to enable the sovereign to reward eminent merit, and thereby to invite others to the same

laudable exertions in the public service. But was it, he said, to be supposed that for want of such an incentive for a few months, the country was likely to be deprived of the service of men of merit. If his majesty recovered, as they all hoped, and had reason to expect he would, the power of creating peers might be exercised by the rightful holder of the prerogative; but if, unfortunately, his majesty should grow worse, and be pronounced not likely to recover for a long time, parliament would have it in its power to take off the restriction, and vest the regent with a power, which though not at present, he was ready to admit might in time become necessary to the carrying on of a powerful government. Thirdly, This power was designed to provide for the fluctuation of wealth and property in the country, that by raising men of great landed interest to the peerage, that branch of the legislature should be always placed upon its true and proper basis. But surely it would not be contended, that it was necessary to provide in a temporary plan for exigencies, which could only arise from the lapse of considerable periods of time. For all these reasons taken together he should therefore propose, that the regent should be restrained from the exercise of that part of the prerogative of the crown.

The next restriction he should propose was, that the regent should not grant any pension or place for life, or in reversion, other than such place as is, from its nature, to be holden for life, or during good behaviour. This restriction, he said, flowed from the same principle, which supported the former; it would prevent his majesty from being put on a worse footing, should he recover, than he was before his illness; and it could not be said, that the power restrained by this limitation was necessary to a regent.

The next was, to restrain the regent from exercising any power over the personal property of the king. Mr. Pitt on this occasion observed, that he scarcely thought it necessary to pass this resolution, as it was not probable, that his royal highness should interfere with his majesty's personal property in his life-time, but as they were acting upon parliamentary principles, he thought it his duty to submit it to the committee.

The last resolution would be for entrusting the care of the royal person during his majesty's illness, where of course all men would be unanimous in agreeing that the royal person ought to be placed, in the guardianship of the queen; and with this trust his intention was, to propose to put the whole of his majesty's household under her authority, investing her with full powers to
 disburse

dismiss and appoint, as she should think proper. Without being invested with this control, he imagined that the queen could not discharge the important trust committed to her care. These officers were, for the most part, in actual attendance upon his majesty's person, and he did not see how they could be put under the control of the regent, while the care of his majesty, upon whom they were to attend, was trusted to another person.

The lords of the bed chamber, indeed, might not be thought necessary now, when their attendance could not be required; but, on the other hand, a generous and liberal nation would not have it said, that in the moment of the king's illness they had grown so economical, that they would not bear the expence of supporting, till his recovery, those officers who formed part of his majesty's royal state; it would be no pleasant thing to his majesty to be told, should he, on his recovery, call for some one of those lords who used to be about his person, that they had been dismissed, that the nation might save the expence attending their offices.

Lastly, he should propose, that a council should be named to assist the queen with their advice, whenever she should require it: but who should not have any power of control, but barely that of giving advice, and of satisfying themselves daily of the state of the king's health: and that they, or some others, should be appointed to manage the real and personal estate of the king, with this restriction, not to alienate, or to dispose of any part of it, except by lease.

Mr. Pitt then moved the first of the five resolutions* which he successively brought

* The form of the resolution was as follows:

“ *Resolved*, That for the purpose of providing for the exercise of the royal authority, during the continuance of his majesty's illness, in such manner, and to such extent, as the present circumstances and the urgent concerns of the nation appear to require, it is expedient that his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, being resident within the realm, shall be empowered to exercise and administer the royal authority, according to the laws and constitution of Great Britain, in the name and on the behalf of his majesty, and under the stile and title of regent of the kingdom; and to use, execute, and perform, in the name and on the behalf of his majesty, all authorities, prerogatives, acts of government, and administration of the same, which belong to the King of this realm to use, execute, and perform, according to the laws thereof, subject to such limitations and exceptions as shall be provided.

“ *Resolved*, That the power, so to be given to his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, shall not extend to the granting of any rank or dignity of the peerage of the realm to any person what-

brought before the house: they were warmly contested in their progress through the commons, as well as they were in passing through the lords: the divisions upon them or the different amendments proposed kept the same proportion throughout: in the lords a very strong * protest was signed by fifty-five lords, at the head of whom were two princes of the blood.

On

“ ever, except to his majesty's royal issue who shall have obtained the full age of twenty-one years.

“ *Resolved*, That the said powers should not extend to the granting in reversion, of any office whatever, or to the granting of any office, salary, or pension, for any other term than during his Majesty's pleasure, except such offices as are by law required to be granted for life, or during good behaviour.

“ *Resolved*, That the said powers should not extend to the granting of any part of his majesty's real or personal estate, except so far as relates to the renewal of leases.

“ *Resolved*, That the care of his majesty's royal person, during the continuance of his majesty's illness, should be committed to the queen's most excellent majesty; and that her majesty should have power to remove from, and to nominate and appoint such persons as she shall think proper; to the several offices in his majesty's household; and to dispose, order and manage all other matters and things relating to the care of his majesty's royal person, during the time aforesaid: and that, for the better enabling her majesty to discharge this important trust, it is also expedient that a council should be appointed, to advise and assist her majesty in the several matters aforesaid. And with power from time to time, as they may see cause, to examine upon oath, the physicians and others attending his majesty's person, touching the state of his majesty's health, and all matters relative thereto.”

* The form of the protest will apprize the reader of the general grounds, upon which the friends of the Prince opposed the resolutions, and as it may be matter of historical curiosity to know how the different members voted on this important occasion, a correct list of the majority and minority and of those who did not vote, may be seen in the Appendix, No. LXXIX.

Dissentient,

1st. Because we firmly adhere to the principles and arguments, on which we disapproved the resolutions formerly passed by this house, especially when the legislative power of the two houses of parliament, unconstitutionally assumed by those resolutions, is meant to be employed to restrict or suspend many important and essential branches of the royal power, at the moment of the declared incapacity of the King.

2d. Because we think the power of conferring the rank and privileges of the peerage, as a reward to merit, is necessary to the royal authority, in order to afford an incitement to vigorous exertions in the service of the state, and is more peculiarly necessary (like all other parts of the prerogative) when the regal power is to be exercised by a substitute, with an authority uncertain and precarious in its duration: but especially on the present occasion, as it is the only branch of the prerogative sufficiently powerful to afford a remedy against such a combination in this house, as other parts of this system of restriction and mutilation, have a natural and obvious tendency to produce.

And

On the 27th of January, 1789, Mr. Pitt after having recapitulated the various steps, that had been already taken, observed, that before they proceeded any farther, he thought it would be most respectful to the Prince of Wales, and most expedient in the order of their proceedings, to endeavour to know, whether his royal highness were willing to accept the regency upon the terms of the resolution which they had come to. With this view he moved, That a committee should be appointed to attend his Royal Highness

And because we conceive that this restriction may create an interest in the members of this house, to withhold their assent to restore the ancient powers of the crown in this respect.

3d. Because we conceive, that by the subsisting law of the land, his majesty's property is sufficiently secured from any undue disposition and alienation, and the resolution on that subject can have no other effect, but to convey to the public injurious suspicion, and unjust imputation, on the character and intentions of his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales.

4th. Because we are of opinion, that in order to maintain the proper dignity of the crown, and preserve the due influence and respect, which arise from the great offices of the state, it is necessary that the person exercising the royal authority in the name and on the behalf of his majesty, should be attended by those distinguished servants, whose functions have been established for the purpose of adding weight and splendor to the regal office. We cannot agree to a division of the royal power; to the creation of a fourth estate, unknown to the constitution of this country.

Frederick	Loughborough	Southampton	Bayle
Henry	Scarborough	Shaftesbury	Maynard
Lothian	Foley	Chedworth	Eglington
Devonshire	Ponsonby	Portland	Sandwich
Audley	Douglas	Huntingdon	Kinnaird
Craven	Rawdon	Egremont	Aberdeen
Bedford	St. John	Ponsonby	Chr. Bristol
Carlisle	R. Landaff	Malmesbury	Hay
Portchester	Cholmondeley	Sandes	Rodney
Pelham	Hereford	Montfort	Northumberland
Breadalbane	Peterborough	Derby	W. Fitzwilliam
Cassilis	Stawell	Hertford	Buckinghamshire
Abergavenny	Cardiff	Cadogan	

Diff. for the 2d, 3d, and 4th, reasons.

St. Albans.

Diff. for the 1st, 2d, and 4th, reasons only.

Clifton	Suffolk and Berks
Spencer	Hawke

Diff. For all the reasons given in this protest, except those in the latter parts of the 2d. reason, viz. beginning at these words, "but especially on, &c." and thence to the end of that second reason.

Selkirk.

the

the Prince of Wales with the resolutions, which had been agreed to by the lords and commons, for the purpose of supplying the defect of the personal exercise of the royal authority during his majesty's illness, by empowering his royal highness to exercise such authority, in the name and on behalf of his majesty, subject to the limitations and restrictions which the circumstances of the case then appeared to require; and, that the committee should express the hope, which the commons entertained, that his royal highness, from his regard to the interests of his majesty and the nation, would be ready to undertake the weighty and important trust proposed to be invested in his royal highness as soon as an act of parliament should have been passed for carrying the said resolutions into effect.

This motion gave rise to a very heated altercation, in which the ministers were accused, and they defended themselves against the accusations of having treated the Prince of Wales, throughout the whole course of their proceedings, with the most shameful want of attention and respect. The motion was voted without a division, and ordered to be carried to the lords for their concurrence, together with a similar resolution for a committee to lay before the Queen the resolution of the two houses, relating to the care of his Majesty's person.

The resolutions having been read in the house of lords on the 28th, and a motion made for their lordships concurrence, the Duke of Northumberland briefly observed, that these resolutions, as proposed to be presented to the prince for his assent, appearing on the face of them most materially to curtail the exercise of that royal authority, which they were about to put into his hands, would, as they stood, seem to convey a want of confidence in his royal highness; he conceived it, therefore, would be but decent in their lordships to specify the reasons which had guided their lordships in adopting those resolutions.

It having been most generally taken as the ground for those restrictions, that his Majesty's illness was but temporary, and would probably be but of short duration, he conceived their lordships could have no objection to connect that with the address. His grace concluded with moving an amendment to that effect, which was negatived without farther debate; and the usual blanks were ordered to be filled up with the words, " lords spiritual and temporal."

On the 30th of January the two committees presented to the Prince of Wales and the Queen the resolutions of the two houses.

To this committee his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales was graciously pleased to give the following answer.

“ MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

“ I THANK you for communicating to me the resolutions
 “ agreed upon by the two houses, and I request you to assure them in my
 “ name, that my duty to the King my father, and my anxious concern for
 “ the safety and interests of the people, which must be endangered, by a long
 “ suspension of the exercise of the royal authority; together with my respect
 “ for the united desires of the two houses, outweigh, in my mind, every other
 “ consideration, and will determine me to undertake the weighty and impor-
 “ tant trust proposed to me, in conformity to the resolutions now communi-
 “ cated to me. I am sensible of the difficulties that must attend the execution
 “ of this trust, in the peculiar circumstances, in which it is committed to my
 “ charge, of which, as I am acquainted with no former example, my hopes
 “ of a successful administration cannot be founded on any past experience.
 “ But confiding that the limitations on the exercise of the royal authority
 “ deemed necessary for the present, have been approved by the two houses
 “ only as a temporary measure, founded on the loyal hope, in which I
 “ ardently participate, that his majesty’s disorder may not be of long dura-
 “ tion, and trusting, in the mean while, that I shall receive a zealous and united
 “ support in the two houses and in the nation, proportioned to the difficulty
 “ attending the discharge of my trust in this interval; I will entertain the
 “ pleasing hope, that my faithful endeavours to preserve the interests of the
 “ king, his crown, and the people, may be successful.”

When the committee presented the resolutions of the lords and commons concerning the custody of his majesty’s person, her majesty was graciously pleased to give the following answer.

“ MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

“ MY duty and gratitude to the king, and the sense I
 “ must ever entertain of my great obligations to this country, will certainly
 “ engage my most earnest attention to the anxious and momentous trust
 “ intended to be reposed in me by parliament. It will be a great consolation
 “ to me to receive the aid of a council, of which I shall stand so much in
 “ need, in the discharge of a duty wherein the happiness of my future life is
 “ indeed

“ indeed deeply interested, but which a higher object, the happiness of a great, loyal, and affectionate people, renders still more important.”

These resolutions and answers were ordered to be entered on the journals; and the minister, when business was resumed in the house, emphatically entreated gentlemen to pause, and by giving the bill, that would be laid before them a deliberate perusal and cool unbiassed reflection, proceed in future with the caution due to such a momentous transaction. On the 31st of January, 1789, the house of lords being in a committee of the whole house on the state of the nation, Lord Camden began with remarking, that being still merely a convention, they could do no one legislative act till they were enabled so to do by the presence or assent of the sovereign. Deprived of the assistance of his majesty in his natural capacity, they were compelled to resort to his political capacity. There was but one organ by which this assistance could be obtained, and that organ was the great seal. This mode of proceeding, he knew, had already been ridiculed as a phantom. But would those, who were thus free of their ridicule impart any other mode, by which they could be extricated from their present difficulties? They were compelled, therefore, by necessity to resort to the resolutions of the two houses, empowering the proper person to make use of the great seal; an instrument, which his lordship said, was of such great and particular authority, that even if the lord chancellor committed a high misdemeanor by affixing it to letters patent, those instruments must be considered valid; they would have the whole force of law, and could not be disputed by the judges. His lordship, in support of this doctrine, quoted the conduct of lord chancellor Hardwicke, who had suffered the great seal to be affixed to an instrument in the manner he now proposed. Two resolutions, he said, would be therefore found necessary to be adopted under their present circumstances to compleat the legislature. The first was, to establish a commission to open and hold the parliament in due form; the second would follow up the first at a convenient time, for the purpose of empowering the royal assent to be given in his majesty's name to the bill of regency, by the same, or by another commission. His lordship concluded by moving, “ That it is expedient and necessary that letters patent, “ under the great seal of Great Britain, be empowered to be issued by the “ authority of the two houses of parliament, in the tenor and form following:” Then followed an exact transcript of the writ usually issued under the sign manual, empowering certain commissioners to open and hold the king's
parliaments

parliaments at Westminster. The commissioners nominated by the present letters patent, were, the Prince of Wales, the Duke of York, the Dukes of Cumberland and Gloucester, together with the other persons usually inserted therein.

The motion having been seconded, Lord Portchester arose, and observed, they were now in that precise situation, where they stood two months since, with this difference only, that they were now going to do, by a pretended act of parliament, what should have been done by a declaration of the two houses. But besides this fiction of the great seal, there were other stumbling blocks in their way. By two acts of parliament, the sign manual was made essentially necessary to the validity of any act: these were, the acts of 33d of Henry the Eighth, and the 1st of Philip and Mary; the former declaring, that no act could be valid unless signed by the sovereign, or, in his absence, by the *custos regni*; and the latter, in deciding on the attainder of the Duke of Norfolk, speaking the same language, but in stronger terms.

Lord Camden replied, that a different meaning was to be attached to those acts: they were, he contended, acts merely affirmative; that is, they asserted, that acts so signed, were legal; but they no where contained the assertion, that those acts could not be legalized in any other form. His lordship added a precedent in point, that of the 28th of Elizabeth, which had actually passed under the great seal only, and without the sign manual.

His Royal Highness the Duke of York rose unexpectedly at this moment, and said, he had not been informed, that it was intended to insert his name in the commission, and therefore it had not been in his power to take any steps to prevent it. He could not sanction the proceedings with his name, not wishing to stand upon record, and be handed to posterity, as approving such a measure. His opinion of the whole system adopted was already known: he deemed the measure proposed, as well as every other that had been taken respecting the same subject, to be unconstitutional and illegal. He desired, therefore, to have nothing to do with any part of the business; and requested that his name, and that of his brother, the Prince of Wales, might be left out of the commission.

Lord Camden said, upon a requisition thus communicated, there could be no hesitation. He should not for a moment resist the royal duke's desire, but would readily agree to omit his royal-highness's name, and that of his royal highness the Prince of Wales.

The Dukes of Cumberland and Gloucester desired their names might also be omitted, which was complied with.

The resolutions, as amended and passed by the lords, on February the 2d, having been communicated to the House of Commons, Mr. Pitt moved for their concurrence therein. This motion, which was at length carried without a division, gave rise to a long and warm debate. The resolutions were defended, as affording the only legal security to their proceedings, which the case admitted of. On the other side, it was urged, that however they might thus be made formally legal, yet being substantially and historically otherwise, it would have been much more safe, that the whole case should stand upon its own ground, distinguished as an irregular proceeding, justified only by necessity, than to call in counterfeit props to support it. The precedents of the reign of Henry the Sixth, upon which so much stress had been laid, whilst ministers were contending for the right of the two houses to nominate a regent, were now totally abandoned. In conformity to those precedents, the Prince of Wales ought to be empowered, by the proposed commission, to open the parliament in the king's name, and to exercise the legislative authority of the king, in the passing of such acts as might be tendered for the royal assent. Nor could there be now any ground of apprehension that he should reject a bill of limitation, as he had already declared his willingness to accept the regency with the restrictions proposed.

Mr. Burke, in a long and able speech, supported the exclusive right of the Prince of Wales to the regency; and endeavoured to impress the committee with a sense of the fatal consequences that might follow, from admitting any idea of competition in it, to the unity of the empire, the integrity of the constitution, and the hereditary succession to the throne itself.

The day following, February the 3d, the speaker with the commons being at the bar of the House of Lords, Earl Bathurst, who sat as speaker for the lord-chancellor, acquainted them, that the illness of his majesty had made it necessary, that a commission in his name should pass the great seal, which they would hear read. The clerk having read the commission, Lord Bathurst, in a short speech,* opened the causes of their present meeting, and the objects, for which they were to provide. As

* Lord Bathurst's speech was as follows :

“ MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

“ IN pursuance of the authority given to us by his majesty's commission
“ under the great seal, which has been read, amongst other things, to declare the causes of your
“ present

As soon as the commons had returned to their house, and had gone through the usual forms, Mr. Pitt rose, and after a short preface, moved, that leave be given to bring in a bill to provide for the care of his majesty's royal person, and for the administration of the regal authority during his majesty's illness. Leave was accordingly given; and the bill was brought in and read for the first time, without a debate, on the day following.

So far in this delicate and important situation of the British empire, had the minister laid down and successfully put in train, a system of provisional regency, during the uncertain duration of his majesty's incapacity, fettered and clogged with restrictions and limitations, which it was frequently urged by the gentlemen in the opposition, were industriously calculated to produce a weak government with a strong opposition. Mr. Burke particularly observed, that it was insulting and injurious to the prince, as his royal highness's conduct had never given the remotest ground for suspecting him of a disposition to abuse power. It was evidently the intention, and probably the expectation of the British minister, that the two houses of the Irish parliament should follow the example of those of Great Britain. This national calamity had too recently followed the declaration of Irish legislative independence, to ground any reasonable expectation in our cabinet, that the parliament of Ireland would be dictated to by a British convention, with all the auxiliary powers and effects intended to be attached to the application of the great seal. Many grounds of anxiety, mistrust, and alarm, with reference to the conduct of the Irish on this trying occasion, agitated the breasts of the British and Irish cabinets. The conscious unpopularity of the Marquis of Buckingham: the real congeniality of principle in the bulk of every independent Irishman with that party, which had given them independence in 1782, and now opposed the galling and humiliating fetters about to be rivetted on the regent; the sympathy of the true Irish character, with the native proofs, generosity, and magnanimity of the prince: the national disgust, contempt, and detestation of any thing mean, sordid, and suspicious: and, above all, the brilliant and important occasion of exercising their national independence in ascertaining and establishing the constitutional boundaries of the royal authority in the

“ present meeting, we have only to call your attention to the melancholy circumstances of his majesty's illness; in consequence of which, it becomes necessary to provide for the care of his majesty's royal person, and for the administration of the royal authority, during the continuance of this calamity, in such manner as the exigency of the case seems to require.”

person of their favourite prince. All these considerations deterred the joint cabinet from convening the Irish parliament. From the moment, however, of the melancholy tidings of the king's malady having been announced in Ireland, effects were daily more and more discernable of the rising difficulties, which the government would have to encounter in persuading or forcing the Irish nation to adopt the very extraordinary measures of the British cabinet.

Amongst the first impressions, which the fatal news of his majesty's incapacity to exercise the executive functions of government produced upon the greatest part of the Irish nation, was the flattering expectation of soon seeing an end to the administration, which they considered systematically inimical to their welfare. To a change of ministers, they naturally attached a dissolution of parliament. As early, therefore, as in the month of November, 1788, meetings were had throughout the kingdom, and associations formed preparatory to the expected election for a new parliament; and a common test was very generally agreed upon to be tendered, and sworn to by every candidate before he should be entitled to propose himself as a representative of either county or borough: the associated electors bound themselves to each other (generally by oath), to vote for no man who should refuse to subscribe, and swear to their test: the purport of which was: 1stly. To vote for a percentage tax upon the property of all absentees. 2dly. For a settlement or commutation of tithes. 3dly. For the restoration of the sail cloth manufacture. 4. For a bill to limit the pension list, (with a N. B. that it then exceeded that of England by 8000*l*.) 5thly. For a reform in the popular representation in parliament. 6thly. For protecting duties.

On the other hand, the most unlimited discretion and imperative instructions, were received at the Castle from England, to procure from Ireland a formal recognition, that whomever Great Britain should appoint as regent, should, *ipso facto*, be received in Ireland with all the restrictions and limitations imposed upon the regent in Great Britain; with peremptory orders to convene the parliament the instant his excellency could answer for a majority for carrying such recognition. Unusual exertions to gain over the members to that point were used by all the means, which the Castle influence, aided at that time by the British treasury, could command. Threats also were circulated, and generally credited, (not rashly, as experience afterwards proved), that, whoever possessing place or pension, should vote against the minister, would
forfeit,

forfeit, or be deprived. Yet inasmuch as the Leinster, the Shannon, the Tyrone, and most other independent interests in Ireland, violently opposed Mr. Pitt's plan of regency, the canvass of the Castle proved unsuccessful; and it was previously known, that government would be left in a minority on the question: they therefore deferred the evil day as long as possible, and convened the parliament only on the 5th of February, after the whole plan had been settled, and submitted to by the Prince in England. On an emergency so pressing, the lord-lieutenant, who at no time had been popular, now found himself importuned and harrassed beyond bearing: the deaths of Sir William Montgomery and Lord Clifden, who held lucrative places under government, brought upon his excellency a host of besiegers, rather than beseechers, who imposed their extortionary demands with an arrogance in proportion to the value now known to be set on a single vote at the Castle.

A singular measure was about this time carried with a high hand, which Lord Townshend had once carried, though he were forced immediately after to abandon it: this was the division of the revenue and excise board: preparatory to which his excellency appointed one of the Beresford family to be second council to the commissioners. About this time also his excellency found it necessary to restore to the officers in barracks their wonted allowances of firing, which in a former fit of subaltern economy he had stopped from them: this pitiful stoppage had been laid on to the great discontent of the army; and being very ungraciously removed, the alleviation was received without gratitude. The very creatures of the Castle decried the parsimonious system pursued within its walls, and contrasted it against the days of Lord Townshend, who had done more by table attachments, than his command of the treasury. Amongst other economical arrangements, the Marquis of Buckingham about this time appointed an additional commissioner to the stamp office; which the people considered as a new and unnecessary creature, and in defiance of a statute, which had already appointed a given number of commissioners. The opposition to the Marquis of Buckingham's administration, feeling their own strength, and anxious to lose no part of it, from want of concert and harmony, met on the 3d of February, 1789, at Lord Charlemont's house in Rutland-square, in order to arrange their plan of operation for the meeting of the parliament.

The session was opened by the Marquis of Buckingham on the 5th of February,

bruary, 1789, who, in his speech* from the throne, informed the two houses of the severe indisposition with which the king had been afflicted, and apprized them, that he had directed all the documents respecting his majesty's health, which could assist their deliberations, to be laid before them. On the next day, some objections to the address to the lord-lieutenant, were made, that brought on a very long and interesting conversation: for as it was the common belief, that the government of the Marquis of Buckingham would now be of very short duration,† opinions were delivered of his excellency without any

* 13 Journ. Com.

“ MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN.

“ WITH the deepest concern I find myself obliged, on opening the present session of parliament, to communicate to you that his majesty has been for some time afflicted by a severe malady, in consequence of which he has not honored me with his commands upon the measures to be recommended to his parliament.

“ I have directed such documents as I have received respecting his majesty's health, to be laid before you; and I shall also communicate to you as soon as I shall be enabled, such further information as may assist your deliberations on that melancholy subject.”

“ GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

“ DEEMING it at all times my indispensable duty to call your attention to the security of the public credit, and to the maintenance of the civil and military establishments, I have ordered the public accounts to be laid before you.

“ MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN.

“ IT is unnecessary for me to express to you my earnest wishes for the welfare and prosperity of Ireland, which, in every situation, I shall always be anxious to promote. Nor need I declare my confidence in that affectionate attachment to his majesty, and in that zealous concern for the united interests of both kingdoms, which have manifested themselves in all your proceedings.”

† The reason of submitting to the reader some of these severe censures upon the Marquis of Buckingham is, that they are the strongest vouchers that can be procured of several important facts, necessary to be known to those, who take an interest in the genuine history of Ireland: and it appears, that such of those facts asserted or referred to on this occasion, as were not contradicted by any of the gentlemen, whose disposition, interest, and duty called upon them to deny them, (if false), must be admitted as true. 9 Parl. Debates. Mr. Brown, of the College, said, that he came into the house extremely well-disposed to dilacerate the public character of the viceroy; but really it was now left in so miserable and mangled a condition, that it would be ungenerous, and unmanly, to attack the small fragment that remained. He could only now talk of what he intended to have done, which had been already anticipated by other assailants. He might have painted the acclamations, with which his administration began; the disgrace, with which it terminated; the declarations against jobbing; the actual jobbing that succeeded; jobbing in the closet; coercion

any reserve or tenderness to his character or situation : and by the turn of the debate, the ministers seemed thoroughly conscious of commanding no longer
that

coercion in the offices. A little gnawing, corroding, venomous scrutiny, which eats its way into the hearts of some poor men, who had not strength of body to bear violent accusation, or strength of mind enough to retort on greater offenders ; which seemed to look out for crimes and forfeitures, as objects of prey, not of correction. He might have painted an œconomy, which instead of applying itself to great objects, such as the pension list, police establishment, or sinecure offices, fell upon a few miserable military tailors ; and by depriving them of their little fire, in reality increased, instead of diminishing, the expence of clothing the army. He might have dwelt on a prorogation of parliament, prejudicial to the public business, and unnecessary, except for the purposes of a faction.

Mr. Grattan wished that the lord-lieutenant had not been introduced into the address : he said, the expences of the Marquis of Buckingham were accompanied with the most extraordinary professions of œconomy and censures on the conduct of the administration, that immediately preceded him ; he had exclaimed against the pensions of the Duke of Rutland, a man accessible undoubtedly to applications, but the most disinterested man on earth, and one whose noble nature demanded some, but received no indulgence from the rigid principles or professions of the Marquis of Buckingham. He exclaimed against his pensions, and he confirmed them : he resisted motions made to disallow some of them ; and he finally agreed to a pension for Mr. Orde, the secretary of the Duke of Portland's administration, whose extravagance was at once the object of his invective, and of his bounty : he resisted his pension, if report says true ; and having shewn that it was against his conscience, he submitted. Mr. Orde can never forgive the Marquis the charges made against the man he thought proper to reward : the public will never forgive the pension given to a man the Marquis thought proper to condemn. The pension list, said he, whose increase the Marquis condemned, he had an opportunity to restrain. A bill limiting the amount of pensions was proposed by an honorable friend of his, and was resisted by the Marquis of Buckingham ; his secretary was the person to oppose that bill, and to give a signal to the servants of the crown to resist it. He assigned his reason, viz. because he thought his excellency was entitled to the same confidence which had been reposed in the other viceroys, that is, the confidence, which the Marquis of Buckingham pathetically declared had been grossly abused. The police was another theme of his excellency's indignation ; he had exclaimed, or had been said to have exclaimed, against the expence of that establishment. A committee was appointed to examine into its utility ; and after a long and minute investigation, discovered that the turbulence and corruption of the police-men, were at least equal to the extravagance of the establishment. With that two-fold knowledge of its prodigality and its licentiousness, he defended the police establishment, and resisted a measure to repeal that bill ; defending in parliament every measure, against which he was supposed to have exhausted his time in invective and in investigation.

The park establishment was supposed also to have excited his indignation. A motion was made to disallow some of those charges, and resisted by all the strength of his government. He was on these subjects satisfied with a minute examination, a poor and passionate exclamation, and a miserable acquiescence. Some of these expences must have stopped, because they were for furniture
and

that docile majority, which they had so long kept steady in their ranks, and by a look or nod had marshalled to every command, that issued from their bench.

If

and improvement, and were not annual expences ; but the principle remained ; the country was open to the repetition of the charge ; and the Marquis had only to take credit for the ceasing of charges, which must for a time have stopped of themselves, but which, by his influence and resistance in parliament to motions disallowing them, might be renewed ; but he not only continued the evils he found ; he introduced a number ; on the expences of his predecessor he introduced jobs of his own. He increased salaries in the departments, which he proposed, and was said to reform. He made by that increase certain places parliamentary objects, which before had not come into the sphere of what is called parliamentary corruption ; and greatly increased the influence of the crown at the time he affected to reduce the expences of the nation. The disposition he made of some of those offices, was in favor of very worthy men. He would not say that one of them was not yet underplaced, but he did say, that his office ought not to have been raised to his merits, for his merits were his own, and of course during life ; but the increase was perpetual ; and the increase of salary would never want a pretence if this argument were admitted. You will easily have that species of œconomy, which does at least as much mischief as good, checks peculation, and promotes undue influence. He did not confine himself to the increase of salaries ; he projected, if fame says true, a number of new offices to be created for the accommodation of friends, at the public expence, by dividing and splitting offices or boards, under that worst species of profusion, the mask of œconomy, laying the foundation of new salaries hereafter, and increasing undue influence for the present. But there was one of his projects he had actually carried into execution, the revival of an obsolete office, the second counsel to the commissioners : that office was the remnant of a wretched job, attempted eighteen years ago, and put down because impracticable and improper. The division of the boards of custom and excise, for extending the undue influence of the crown ; that measure was put down ; but the second counsel, a wretched remnant, was suffered for a time : and when the then counsel, Mr. Maunsel, died, his place also was discontinued. It thus remained on the establishment an obsolete unoccupied office, until it had been revived by the Marquis of Buckingham, no doubt, it will be said, for the purpose of saving. The office was to be a great saving to the public ; he was to feed like the first counsel in the revenue. You are to have two counsel instead of one, to give opinions, and to receive fees in all revenue proceedings : but this was to be a great saving. He was not at present to be consulted in the framing of the money bills ; but this was a private transaction ; and this was a saving, on the duration of which little dependance was to be had. He had stated particular instances of the expensive genius of the Marquis of Buckingham in the management of the public money : and in the course of one year, the year, in which even prodigal lord-lieutenants impose on themselves a reserve. But these particular instances were principles, bad principles : the attempt to increase the number of offices, was an attempt to increase corruption : the man guilty of that attempt was not pure. The revival of an obsolete useless office for a friend, was a bad principle ; and if accompanied with extraordinary profession of public parsimony, was a detestable principle : hypocrisy, added to extravagance ! His great objection to the Marquis of Buckingham, was not merely that he had been a jobber, but a jobber in a mask : his objection

If the nature of the Irish character be fairly considered, that they are a people of quick impulse, irascible, generous, unsuspecting, daring and intrepid, forming

objection was not merely, that his administration had been expensive, but that his expenses were accompanied with hypocrisy: it was the affectation of œconomy, attended with a great deal of good, comfortable, substantial jobbing for himself and his friends. That led to another measure of the Marquis of Buckingham, which was the least ceremonious, and the most sordid and scandalous act of self-interest, attended with the sacrifice of all public decorum; he meant the disposal of the reversion of the place of the chief remembrancer to his brother, one of the best, if not the very best office in the kingdom, given in reversion to an absentee, with a great patronage and a compensation annexed. That most sordid and shameless act was committed exactly about the time when that kingdom was charged with great pensions for the bringing home, as it was termed, absentee employments. That bringing home absentee employments was a monstrous job; the kingdom paid the value of the employment, and perhaps more; she paid the value of the tax also. The pensioner so paid was then suffered to sell both to a resident, who was free from the tax: he was then permitted to substitute new and young lives in the place of his own, and then permitted to make a new account against the country, and to receive a further compensation, which he was suffered in the same manner to dispose of. In excuse for that sort of traffic they were told, that they were not buying places, but principles; the principle of confining the great employments of that country to residents; a principle invaluable, they were told, to her pride and her interest. While they were thus buying back principles, and while the Marquis of Buckingham was professing a disinterested regard for the prosperity of Ireland, in opposition to the principles and the professions, he disposed of the best reversion in Ireland to his own family; the only family in the world that could not, with decency, receive it, as he was the man in the world, that could not dispose of it to them. After that, Lord Buckingham was not to be called disinterested; call him any thing else; give him any appellation you please of ability or activity, but do not call him a public reformer; do not ridicule him by calling him a disinterested man.

Gentlemen had spoken about public inconstancy, and had dwelled on the rapid turn of the public mind, in despising now what a year ago it seemed to idolize; but let those gentlemen reflect a little. When a man in a high situation professed to be a reformer; when he exclaimed against the profusion and memory of his predecessor; when he taught the people to deceive themselves; enfeoffed himself in popularity; shook hands with the populace; when such a man agreed to no one constitutional or œconomic bill; on the contrary, resisted motions for disallowing extravagance, and bills tending to secure the country against future extravagance, and set up his own temporary regulations, his own contingent savings, and casual fractions of œconomy, in the place of laws; such a man must speedily forfeit the opinion of the public: but when the same man shall, to the crime of omission, add that of commission, shall increase the expenses, of which he complained, on the principle which he affected to reprobate; multiply undue influence, and create or revive offices merely for private gratification: and finally, shall attach the best office of the kingdom to his family, whilst he affects to attach the love of the public to his person: such a man could not be surprized at the loss of popularity; an event the

forming the wisest resolutions, but impatient of the delays necessary to bring them to maturity, and crown their perseverance with success: if it be considered,

natural consequence, not of public inconstancy, but of his own inconsistency; of his great professions and his contingent savings overbalanced by his jobbing; a teasing and minute industry ending in one great principle of œconomy, and tarnished by attempts to increase the influence of corruption, and by a fordid and indecorous sense of private interest.

Sir John (now Lord) Blaquiere, having had particular reason to be displeased at the marquis's scrutinizing spirit of œconomy, made a most angry and personal invective against the lord lieutenant. Mr. Curran spoke largely upon the question; but referred not to facts: he strongly opposed the address, as an address of delay, and improper in its time, nature and circumstances. He observed, that he found the appeal to the compassion of the public stronger than to their justice. He felt the reverses of human fate. He remembered this very supplicant for a compliment, to which he pretended only because it was no compliment, drawn into that city by the people harnessed to his chariot, through streets blazing with illuminations; and after more than a year's labour at computation, he had hazarded all on a paragraph, stating no one act of private or of public good, supported by no man that said he loved him, attested by no act, that said he ought to be beloved, defended not by assertion of his merit, but an extenuation of his delinquency. So much having been said of the Marquis of Buckingham's character and conduct as viceroy of Ireland in face of his secretary and all the supporters of his administration, historical justice demands, that I should lay before the reader all that was said in answer to it. Mr. M. Mason said Mr. Grattan had argued from two facts, which he supposed, but of which there was no proof; the pension to Mr. Orde and the reversion to Mr. Grenville: but of a third, viz. the appointment of a second counsel to the revenue, he could say, it was really œconomical, as revenue causes had so multiplied, that the expence of employing counsel not connected with the revenue was become enormous. Mr. Fitzgibbon maintained this appointment not only as an act of œconomy, but of absolute necessity; as one might be attending a trial at Derry, whilst the other was at Cork. Mr. Boyd spoke to the same effect. Mr. Corry admitted a large increase of salary in his appointment (surveyor of the ordnance), but could at the same time shew some savings to the public in his department, which would fully justify whatever alteration had been made: the intention of the alteration was to place the management in the hands of men, who might be supposed above the little arts of plunder and speculation, which had before disgraced the department much to the public loss. He had ever opposed the extension of pensions, and opposition to that practice was one of the conditions, on which he had accepted of office: but he could not see, that the Marquis of Buckingham deserved censure because a bill to limit pensions had been opposed in his administration. The majority of the house stood pledged to oppose the bill: but the marquis had not added a pension to the list. The solicitor general assured the house, that the Marquis of Buckingham had always spoken honorably of his predecessor. The chancellor of the Exchequer reminded the house, that all the objections, which had been made were either drawn from unproved assertions of past misconduct, or suggestions and conjectures of future impropriety: but he said from experience, that whenever the books should come under the inspection of the house, there would be ample proof of his excellency's attention to œconomy.

sidered, that the immediate prospect then before the eyes of the nation was a change of government, in every principle and feature differing from that of the Marquis of Buckingham, composed of those men, who had given their country freedom and a constitution in 1782, it will be no wonder, that all independent men in parliament should have risen unanimously against a government so little popular; and even that many, who had been fettered to the pernicious system should have indignantly burst their trammels and once more stood forward in support of Irish freedom. Pointed contrasts were drawn between the conduct of the two independent kingdoms of Great Britain and Ireland. The parliament of England had been convened, and the state of the nation boldly investigated in it. Ministers there dared not irritate the people: in Ireland, under the same exigency, they suffered every outrage, and that the Irish might not disagree from the British senate, it was not suffered to assemble. God had incapacitated their king, and the viceroy had incapacitated the other two estates; by virtue of what authority then did he retain his lieutenancy? It was, they said, a paradox in government, that the representative should continue when the power deputed had ceased. It was a new phenomenon, that the shadow remained when the substance was no more. They insisted, that lieutenants of Ireland should regulate their conduct by the constitution of Ireland; and know no other standard; but they were in fact motionless puppets, until the string which actuated them was pulled from across the channel.

mony. Mr. Coote said, the soldiers had not been deprived of their allowance of fuel: some abuses in the distribution of that article indeed had been corrected; and his excellency spoke always most handsomely of the Duke of Rutland. Mr. Cuffe (now Lord Tyrawley) confirmed what had been said of the fuel. Mr. Secretary Hamilton said that he held his house in the Park as an appendage of his office: it was an establishment as old as James I. and every thing there had been conducted with frugality: the accommodation he possessed had been provided by parliament, and whilst his countrymen approved of it, he should never be ashamed of his possession.

Mr. Marcus Beresford agreed with Mr. Curran, that the administration of the Marquis of Buckingham exhibited a strong proof of the instability of human grandeur. But little more than a twelvemonth ago, he was introduced with the plaudits of the nation and of the senate. Those twelve months he had with the most sedulous attention employed himself for the benefit of the country, economizing her expences, and improving her finances. During these twelve months he had not done a single act to merit reprehension, yet such was the futile disposition of some and the party spirit of others, that an effort was made to withhold a trifling compliment, while little-minded men could scarcely refrain from insulting a chief governor, by whose favor they hoped no longer to benefit.

After an amended and qualified address had been voted in the commons, Mr. Fitzherbert (now Lord St. Helen's) moved, that the house should on Monday (the 16th) resolve itself into a committee of the whole house to take into consideration the state of the nation.* As the evident design of this delay was to prevent the Irish parliament from coming to any resolution relative to a regency, before the determination of the British parliament could be proposed to them for their concurrence, it was strongly opposed, as derogatory to the independence of that kingdom, and to the dignity and credit of its parliament. Mr. Grattan, therefore, proposed that the house should meet on the next Wednesday; and his amendment after some debate, was carried by a majority of 128 to 74.

A majority of 54 against the minister was an unexpected thunder clap on the Treasury Bench: inasmuch, that when the chancellor of the Exchequer moved for proceeding immediately upon the business of supply preparatory to the passing of the money bills, and was opposed by Mr. Grattan, they would not risk a division; though by the warmth, with which the attorney general argued for the propriety of the measure, it was an object, which government had much at heart.

The 11th of February, 1789, was the great day of contest upon the regency of Ireland: Mr. Grattan and Mr. Fitzgibbon took the lead on the opposite sides: the house being in committee on the state of the nation, after some preliminary conversation, in which the plan of the castle was candidly avowed by Mr. Fitzherbert, Mr. Grattan said, that the right honorable gentleman had stated the plan of the castle to be limitation and a bill. He proposed to name for the regency of that realm, His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales; in that they perfectly agreed and only followed the most decided wishes of the people of Ireland; they were clear, and had been so from the first, that His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales ought, and must be the regent; but they were also clear, that he should be invested with the full regal power; plenitude of royal power. The limitations, which a certain

* 13 Journ. Com. p. 11. There might have been more truth than delicacy in what Mr. Browne (of the College) observed in this debate. 9 *Parl. Deb.* p. 80. "It was the interest of Lord Buckingham to defer the business of appointing a controlling power over him. As long as the money bills went on in their usual course, there was nothing to urge him to expedition to that appointment: and he should expect every kind of trick and artifice on the part of government, in order to obtain procrastination."

member proposed to impose, were suggested with a view to preserve a servile imitation of the proceedings of another country, not in the choice of a regent, which was a common concern, but in the particular provisions and limitations, which were not a common concern, and which ought to be, and must be governed by the particular circumstances of the different countries. The bill, or instrument which he called a bill, was suggested on an opinion, that an Irish act of parliament might pass without a king in a situation to give the royal assent, and without a regent appointed by the Irish Houses of parliament to supply his place. The idea of limitation, he conceived to be an attack on the necessary power of government; the idea of his bill was an attack on the King of Ireland. They had heard the castle dissenting from their suggestion. It remained for them to take the business out of their hands, and confide the custody of the great and important matter to men more constitutional and respectable. The lords and commons of Ireland, and not the castle, should take the leading part in this great duty. The country gentlemen, who procured the constitution, should nominate the regent. He should submit to them the proceedings they intended in the discharge of that great and necessary duty.

They proposed to begin by a resolution declaring the incapacity of the king, for the present, to discharge the personal functions of the regal power. It was a melancholy truth, but a truth of which no man entertained a doubt; the recovery of the sovereign, however the object of every man's wishes, was that uncertain event, on which no man would presume to despair or to decide. Having then by the first resolution ascertained the deficiency in the personal exercise of the regal power, the next step would be the supply of that deficiency: that melancholy duty fell on the two houses of the Irish parliament; whether they were to be considered as the only surviving estates capable of doing the act, or as the highest description of his majesty's people of Ireland. The method whereby he proposed these great assemblies should supply this deficiency, was address. There were two ways of proceeding to these august bodies perfectly familiar; one by way of legislation; the other by way of address. When they proceeded by way of legislation, it was on the supposition of a third in a capacity to act; but address was a mode exclusively their own, and complete without the interference of a third estate; it was that known parliamentary method, by which the two houses exercised those powers to which they were jointly competent; therefore, he submitted

to them, that the mode by address, was the most proper for supplying the existing deficiency; and though the address should on this occasion have all the force and operation of law, yet still that force and operation arose from the necessity of the case, and were confined to it. They would not profess to legislate in the ordinary forms, as if legislation were their ordinary province; they proposed to make an efficient third estate in order to legislate, not to legislate in order to create the third estate, the deficiency being the want of an efficient third estate. The creation of such an estate was the only act that deficiency made indispensable; so limiting their act they would part with their present extraordinary power the moment they should have exercised it, and the very nature of their act would discharge and determine their extraordinary authority.

But as the addresses of parliament, though competent on the event of such a deficiency to create an efficient third estate, yet would not and could not with propriety annex to their act the forms of law and the stamps of legislation, it was thought adviseable, after the acceptance of the regency, that there should be an act passed reciting the deficiency in the personal exercise of the regal power, and of his royal highness's acceptance of the regency of the realm, at the instance and desire of the two houses of the Irish parliament, and further, to declare and enact, that he was and should be regent thereof during the continuation of his majesty's indisposition. The terms of the act would describe the powers of the regent; and the power intended was, the personal exercise of the full regal authority; and the reason why plenitude of regal power was intended by the address, and afterwards by the bill, was to be found in the nature of the prerogative, which was given, not for the sake of the king, but of the people, for whose use kings and regents, and prerogatives were conceived. They knew of no political reason, why the prerogatives in question should be destroyed, nor any personal reason why they should be suspended.

He had stated the method to be pursued, indeed the method almost stated itself; undoubtedly it was not the method pursued by Great Britain; but the diversity arose from obvious causes. The declaration of right was omitted in their proceedings; why? Because they knew of no claim advanced against the privileges of the people. A declaration of right in such a case, would be a declaration without a meaning; it would bespeak an attack, which had not been made, and would be a defence against no invasion: it
would

would be a false alarm, and hold out false signals of public danger, in times of perfect safety, confounding and perplexing the public mind; so that in the moment of real attack, the people would not be forthcoming. He objected to a declaration of right in Ireland, therefore, as bad husbandry of popular artillery. He objected to it also, as attempting to convey to posterity historic evidence against the constitutional principles of the second person in his majesty's dominions, without any ground or pretence whatsoever. For these two reasons he had not adopted the declaration of right, conceiving it would in that country be no more than a protestation against a claim, which had not been made, and therefore would be a false alarm and a false suggestion.

Their method differed also from that pursued by Great Britain, inasmuch as they gave the full exercise of the regal power; whereas the parliament of Great Britain had imposed limitations; but he had assigned a general principle why limitations were omitted, and would add, that whatever reasons might have been supposed to exist in England for those limitations, they were not so much as pretended in Ireland. He had therefore thought it unnecessary and improper to enfeeble a government, which they professed to restore, as he thought it also improper to defend a constitution, which they acknowledged to be uninvaded. As the substance of their proceedings was different, the mode was different also, and it was impossible, even though they wished it, that the mode should be the same. The mode proposed by the Castle differed from Great Britain more, than that which he had submitted; that which he had submitted, departed from the model of England, but did not commit them with England, nor cast the least reflection on the wisdom of her measures. They concurred in the great object, the regent: in the proceedings necessary to form the regency, the deliberation of the two countries were governed by their respective circumstances. In the proceedings, which he had submitted, it was sufficient to affirm, that all the great objects, which could attract the care of a nation, were punctiliously attended to; first, as to their constitution in every stage of the business, they exercised the power of a free and an independent house of parliament; the incapacity of the king to the personal exercise of the regal power, they discussed and decided: the deficiency thereby declared, they supplied, and having supplied that deficiency, they proceeded to legislate, and give their own work the cloathing and stamp of law. As to their government, they restored it, and restored it to all its energies,

gies, that the concern of the people for the indisposition of the king, might not be aggravated by a tottering and impotent administration of public affairs. They also manifested attachment to the royal family, not only by renewing the government in the person of the heir apparent, but by renewing it in a manner honorable both to Prince and people.

In that great measure he had not relied on his own judgment. He had had recourse to history, he had looked for the highest land mark in the British annals, and had found it in the period of the Revolution.

The address which would be moved, in part of its phraseology was copied from an address voted by the convention parliament to the Prince of Orange, desiring him to take upon himself the conduct of public affairs. The idea of proceeding by address was taken also from those addresses, which declared the Prince and Princess of Orange King and Queen of Ireland; and the idea of an act was also taken from the same period; in the second session of the convention parliament an act passed, containing the substance of the addresses last mentioned, and giving the whole the clothing and form of the law.

There were points, in which the Revolution bore a near resemblance to the existing period, as there were other points, in which it was not only different but opposite. The throne being full, and the political capacity of the king's existing, the power of the two houses could not be applied to that part of the monarchical condition; but the personal capacity of the king, or rather the personal exercise of the royal power being deficient, and the laws of the land not having, in the ordinary course of law, made provision for that deficiency, and one of the estates being incapable, it remained with the other two to administer the remedy by their own authority: the principle of their interference was established by the Revolution, the operation of that principle limited by the contingency, the power of the houses of parliament in the one case extended to remedy a defect in the personal and political capacities of the monarch; in this case it extended only to remedy a defect in the personal capacity, but in both cases it was the power of the houses of parliament called upon to interfere by their own authority when the ordinary course of law had made no provision, and where the three estates could not supply the defect. He had, therefore, had recourse to the precedent of the Revolution in the mode of supplying the existing deficiency.

Gentlemen had called that an important day; he would add to the expression: he would call it a proud day for Ireland; she had deserved it, she had

had struggled hard for her independency, and she was then disposed to make a most judicious use of it: it was not a cold, deliberate act, supplying a deficiency in the regal function; it was not a judicious, but languid nomination of a substitute for the exercise of monarchical power; that country annexed a passion to her proceeding, and kindled in love and affection to the house of Brunswick, and the effect of her exertions, and the great labour of years, in restoring her constitutional rights and privileges, she now gathered in a harvest, which she shared with her princes.

He should therefore move the following resolutions:

“ *Resolved*, That it is the opinion of this committee, that the personal exercise of the royal authority, is, by his majesty’s indisposition, for the present interrupted.”

The question having been put on the resolution, it passed without a division.

Mr. Conolly then rose and said, that on that melancholy occasion, which every gentleman in and out of office lamented, and none more sincerely than he did, it had fallen to the lot of the two houses to put into the kingly office a substitute for their beloved sovereign; and there seemed to be but one mind, which was to make that substitute the illustrious person who had, of all others, the greatest interest in preserving the prerogative of the crown, and the constitution of the realm.

He entirely coincided in the plan Mr. Grattan had proposed, because he was convinced it was consonant to the constitution, and such as his royal highness, to whom he should then move an address, must necessarily approve. He hoped they would be unanimous on the occasion. He therefore moved the following resolution:

“ *Resolved*, That it is the opinion of this committee, that an humble address be presented to his royal highness to take upon himself the government of this realm, during the continuation of his majesty’s present indisposition, and no longer, and under the style and title of Prince Regent of Ireland, in the name of his majesty to exercise and administer, according to the laws and constitution of this kingdom, all regal powers, jurisdiction, and prerogatives to the crown and government thereof belonging”

The motion was seconded by Mr. George Ponsonby.

Several of the former friends of government supported the address, when the Attorney General desired the clerk to read the act of the 4th of William and Mary, chap. 1. sect. 1. which having been done, he requested gentlemen

to recollect they were not debating, whether they were to lay restrictions on the Prince of Wales, or not; but to consider, whether the address moved for were an instrument sufficient to convey to his royal highness the regal authority, and whether it were such an address as they ought to present.

Before he proceeded he would observe, that he was perfectly convinced what he should say would have no manner of effect on gentlemen, who formed the government on the other side of the house; for let them propose whatever address they might take into their heads, it would certainly be voted; and therefore he would not have risen to trouble the committee at all, if he had not been convinced, that the measures proposed were equally contrary to the common statute law of the realm, and criminal in the extreme.

He maintained, that the crown of Ireland and the crown of England were inseparably and indissolubly united; and that the Irish parliament was perfectly and totally independent of the British parliament.

The first position was their security; the second was their freedom; and when gentlemen talked any other language than that, they either tended to the separation of the crowns, or to the subjugation of their parliament; they invaded either their security or their liberty; in fact, the only security of their liberty was their connexion with Great Britain, and gentlemen who risked breaking the connexion, must make up their minds to an union. God forbid he should ever see that day; but if ever the day on which a separation should be attempted, should come, he should not hesitate to embrace an union rather than a separation.

Under the Duke of Portland's government the grievances of Ireland were stated to be

The alarming usurpation of the British parliament.

A perpetual mutiny bill.

And the powers assumed by the privy council.

These grievances were redressed, and in redressing them they passed a law repealing part of Poynings'. By their new law they enacted, that all bills, which should pass the two houses in Ireland, should be certified into England, and returned under the great seal of England, without any addition, diminution, or alteration whatsoever, should pass into law, and no other. By this they made the great seal of England essentially and indispensably necessary on the passing of laws in Ireland; they could pass no act without first certifying it into England, and having it returned under the great seal in that kingdom, inasmuch,

inſomuch, that were the King of England and Ireland to come in perſon, and to reſide in Ireland, he could not paſs a bill without its being firſt certified to his regent in England, who muſt return it under the ſeal of that kingdom before his majeſty could even in perſon aſſent to it. That if the houſe ſhould by force of an addreſs, upon the inſtant, and without any communication with England, inveſt a regent with powers undefined, he ſaid, that when the moment of reflection came, it would ſtartle the boldeſt adventurers in England; and then he reminded gentlemen of the language they held with England in the day they aſſerted their freedom: “ Perpetual connexion; common fortune; we will riſe or fall with England; we will ſhare her liberty, and we will ſhare her fate.” They then applauded the manly policy of England, but would not now condeſcend to receive information from her. Did gentlemen recollect the arguments uſed in England to juſtify the fourth propoſition of the commercial treaty? Ireland, ſaid they, having a parliament of her own, may think fit to carry on a commerce, and regulate her trade by laws different from, perhaps contradictory to, the laws of Great Britain. How well founded that obſervation was, they would prove, if they ſeized the firſt opportunity that offered of differing from Great Britain in a great imperial queſtion; certainly if it be the ſcheme to differ in all imperial queſtions, and if that be abetted by men of great authority, they meant to drive them to an union, and the method they took was certainly more effectual to ſweep away oppoſition, than if all the fluices of corruption were opened together, and deluged the country’s representatives; for it was certain nothing leſs than the alternative of ſeparation that could ever force an union.

He would not yield to any man in perſonal reſpect and attachment to the Prince of Wales. No man could think of him more highly than he did; but he would manifeſt his reſpect and attachment to the Prince of Wales, by endeavouring to preſerve entire the imperial crown, which in the courſe of nature would deſcend to him, and which they then were, by an act of criminal raſhneſs, about to deprive of its beſt appendage. He would not inſult the Prince of Wales by an addreſs, which could not confer on him the ſhadow of royal power; he wiſhed to inveſt him with ſubſtantial royal powers, which he might execute conſiſtently with the laws, by which he was to govern. Would any man ſay, that they were now in full parliament? Was not his majeſty, George the Third, to whom they had all ſworn allegiance, living? and he hoped God in his mercy would ſoon reſtore him. Was not his

lord lieutenant there in full authority? What had they then to do? As soon as it should be certified, that the Prince of Wales was invested with the authority of regent in England, but to pass an act to invest him with that authority in Ireland. Send that act to the prince regent in England; he would then have the command of the great seal of England, and return the act authenticated according to law.

His lord lieutenant might then, by his command, give the royal assent to it; and who would say that it would not be a law of the land? But suppose the Prince did not accept the regency in England; suppose their address should reach him before he was actually invested with royal powers in England, in what situation would you put him? They would call on him, in defiance of two acts of parliament, which made the crowns inseparable, to dethrone the king his father. They would call upon him to do an act now, at which hereafter his nature would revolt. They were false friends of the Prince of Wales, who should advise him to receive an address, that might give him cause to curse the hand, which presented it. He knew, that liberties indecent in the extreme had been taken with the name of that august personage. He knew it had been whispered, that every man, who should vote against the address, would be considered as voting against him, and treating him with disrespect; but if any man had had the guilt and folly to poison the mind with such an insinuation, he trusted to his good sense to distinguish his friends; he would trust to his good sense to determine, whether they were his friends, who wished to guard the imperial rights of the British crown, or they who would stake them upon the momentary and impotent triumph of an English party. What matter to the prince, whether he received royal authority by bill or by address? Was there a man who would presume to libel him, and to assert, that the success of that measure would be a triumph to him?

There was a feature in the proceeding which, independent of every other objection to it, did in his mind make it highly reprehensible, and that was, that he considered it as a formal appeal from the parliament of England to that of Ireland. Respecting the parties, who made that appeal he should say nothing: but although there might be much dignity on their part in receiving the appeal, he could not see any strong symptoms of wisdom in it; because by so doing he should conceive we must inevitably sow the seeds of jealousy and disunion between the parliaments of the two countries; and though he did not by any means desire of the parliament of that country im-

plicitly

plicitly to follow the parliament of England, he should suppose it rather a wise maxim for Ireland always to concur with the parliament of Great Britain, unless for very strong reasons indeed they were obliged to differ from it. If it were to be a point of Irish dignity to differ with the parliament of England to show their independence, he very much feared that sober men in that country, who had estates to lose, would soon become sick of independence. The fact was, that constituted as it was, the government of that country, never could go on, unless they followed Great Britain implicitly in all regulations of imperial policy. The independence of their parliament was their freedom; their dependence on the crown of England was their security for that freedom; and gentlemen, who professed themselves, that night, advocates for the independence of the Irish crown, were advocates for its separation from England.

They should agree with England in three points:—one king, one law, one religion. They should keep these great objects steadily in view, and act like wise men, if they made the Prince of Wales their regent, and granted him the plenitude of power, in God's name let it be done by bill; otherwise he saw such danger, that he deprecreated the measure proposed. He called upon the country gentlemen of Ireland; that that was not a time to think of every twopenny grievance, every paltry disappointment sustained at the castle of Dublin; if any man had been aggrieved by the viceroy, and chose to compose a philippic on the occasion, let him give it on the debate of a turnpike bill, where it would not be so disgraceful to the man who uttered it, and to those who would not listen to him, as it would be on the present occasion. He abominated the idea of restraining the prince regent in the power of making peers in that country, or in limiting him in the power of making grants on the narrow principles of suspicion and distrust. That was a question, which rested upon very different ground in that country from that on which it had been taken up in England; and if gentlemen could reconcile to themselves a precedent for adopting in that country, a different form of executive government from that established in England, he had not the smallest apprehension that the powers, which might be committed to the Prince of Wales by the parliament of Ireland would be abused by him.

The secretary of state said he lamented, that he was under the necessity of differing from those gentlemen, with whom he commonly acted, as to the mode suggested by them, of appointing a regent: he thought it should be
done

done by an address, and that it could not be done by an act of parliament, though he agreed that an act of parliament might be proper to give the forms of law to the appointment of the two houses of parliament; but this was proper only because judges looked into the statute book, and not into the journals of parliament, for their direction in expounding the law; but he affirmed, that the lords and commons of Ireland, whether assembled in parliament or in convention, were fully competent to supply every deficiency in the supreme executive, from whatever cause such deficiency might arise.

A very long and violent debate ensued, the whole weight of which on one side fell upon the Attorney-General, who displayed extraordinary firmness and talent in opposing so powerful and confident a majority. Just before the close of the debate, Mr. Grattan endeavoured to recall the minds of gentlemen to the then posture of it. They had gained ground in the argument; the limitations were not defended: they were not, it was true, given up; they were alledged to be intended, and acknowledged to be indefensible; proposed, scouted, and adhered to; and in the contempt, into which that part of the plan of the castle had fallen, the vile insinuations of intended prodigality, and perverted bounty, (insinuations maliciously whispered against a great personage) had also fallen, and remained in the contempt they deserved. So far the plan stood condemned in the opinion of its principal supporters. Much personal satire and invective passed from both sides: and although it may be truly asserted, that no majority in the Irish House of Commons had ever cost so little to the country, it can not be dissimbled that most, who had quitted their ranks on this occasion to vote for the address, speculated more confidently upon the future prospects under a new administration, than upon the chances of retaining the terms of their former engagements. About three o'clock the question having been put upon the resolution, it was carried without a division. During this debate some riots happened in the purlieu of the house, said to have been committed by gentlemen of the College on some of the police men: several persons with arms having assailed the door-keepers, constables, &c. However the gentlemen of the College were acquitted of the charge by some of the members, who quitted the debate to enquire into the cause of the rioting.

On the 16th of the month the House of Lords met according to their last adjournment, when a motion was made for a further adjournment, (it being

now

now the primary object of government to extend the Chapter of Accidents by gaining time) but was rejected. The Earl of Charlemont then moved for the address to the prince in the words of that, which had been voted in the commons, which with some amendment was carried by a majority of 19*. The address as amended, was as follows :

To His Royal Highness GEORGE Prince of WALES.

The humble Address of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal and Commons in Parliament assembled.

“ MAY IT PLEASE YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS.

“ WE, his majesty’s most dutiful and loyal subjects, the
 “ lords spiritual and temporal, and the commons of Ireland in parliament
 “ assembled, beg leave to approach your royal highness with hearts full of the
 “ most loyal and affectionate attachment to the person and government of
 “ your royal father, to express the deepest and most grateful sense of the
 “ numerous blessings which we have enjoyed under that illustrious house,
 “ whose accession to the throne of these realms has established civil and con-
 “ stitutional liberty, upon a basis which we trust will never be shaken ; and
 “ at the same time to condole with your royal highness upon the grievous
 “ malady with which it has pleased Heaven to afflict the best of sovereigns.
 “ We have, however, the consolation of reflecting, that this severe cala-
 “ mity hath not been visited upon us until the virtues of your royal high-
 “ ness have been so matured, as to enable your royal highness to discharge
 “ the duties of an important trust, for the performance whereof, the eyes of
 “ all his majesty’s subjects of both kingdoms are directed to your royal
 “ highness.

“ We therefore beg leave humbly to request, that your royal highness will
 “ be pleased to take upon you the government of this realm during the con-
 “ tinuation of his majesty’s present indisposition, and no longer ; and under
 “ the stile and title of Prince Regent of Ireland, in the name and on behalf
 “ his majesty, to exercise and administer according to the laws and constitu-
 “ tion of this kingdom, all regal powers, jurisdiction, and prerogatives to
 “ the crown and government thereof belonging.”

* 6 Lords Jour. p. 233. The contents, with the proxies, being 45, and the non-contents 26, a protest was entered by most of the minority, which see in Appendix, No. LXXX. Protests are often the most authentic documents of the grounds upon which particular measures are supported or opposed.

On the next day (17th) a message was received by the commons from the lords, that they had concurred with the commons in their address with the amendment, which the attorney-general endeavoured to convert to the purpose of delay, by proposing a conference upon it with the lords, and even by objecting to some grammatical inaccuracies in the wording of the amendment. It was however insisted upon by Mr. Ponsonby and others, that as the lords had agreed to the address upon the same principles as the commons, no delay should be permitted; the question therefore having been put upon the lords amendment, it was carried unanimously. On the 19th both houses waited upon the lord lieutenant with their address, and requested him to transmit it to his royal highness. With this request his excellency refused to comply; returning for answer, that under the impressions he felt of his official duty, and of the oath he had taken, he did not consider himself warranted to lay before the prince an address, purporting to invest his royal highness with powers to take upon him the government of that realm, before he should be enabled by law so to do; and therefore was obliged to decline transmitting their address to Great Britain.

Upon the return of the commons to their own house, and the answer of the lord lieutenant being reported to them, Mr. Grattan observed, that in a case so extremely new, it would be highly improper to proceed with hurry or precipitation; the house was called upon to act with dignity, firmness, and decision; and therefore, that due time might be had for deliberation, he would move the question of adjournment; which was put and carried without opposition.

On the day following Mr. Fitzherbert moved, that the lord lieutenant's answer should be entered on the journals.

Mr. Grattan said, he was satisfied to let the answer be entered on the journals, in order to make way for some resolutions, which he intended to propose, as necessary to carry the intention of the two houses into effect, and as a vindication of their honor and constitutional conduct.

The answer being entered on the journals, Mr. Grattan moved, "that his excellency the lord lieutenant having thought proper to decline to transmit to his Royal Highness George Prince of Wales, the address of both houses of parliament, a competent number of members be appointed by this house, to present the said address to his royal highness."

This

*This motion brought on a very warm debate, in which the attorney-general travelled again over the whole of his ground, but with no more effect than before : Mr. Grattan's motion was carried by a majority of 130 against 74.

Then Mr. Grattan moved, " that Mr. Conolly should attend the lords " with the said resolution, and acquaint them, that the commons requested " them to appoint members of their own body to join with the members of " the commons in presenting the said address."

This also passed without any division ; and Mr. Conolly went up to the lords accordingly.

The message received in reply was, that the lords had concurred in the resolution of the commons, and had appointed his Grace the Duke of Leinster and the Earl of Charlemont to join with such members as the commons should appoint to present the address of both houses to his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales.

Mr. Grattan then moved, " that the Right Honorable Thomas Conolly, " the Right Honorable J. O'Neil, the Right Honorable W. B. Ponsonby, " and J. Stewart, Esq. should be appointed commissioners on the part of the " commons for the purpose of presenting the address to his Royal Highness " the Prince of Wales," and they were appointed unanimously.

These motions having passed, Mr. Grattan then moved, " that the two " houses of parliament had discharged an indispensable duty, in providing for " the third estate of the Irish constitution (rendered incomplete through the " king's incapacity) by appointing the Prince of Wales regent of Ireland."

Mr. Grattan afterwards moved, " that it be resolved, that his excellency " the lord lieutenant's answer to both houses of parliament, requesting him " to transmit their address to his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, is ill " advised, contains an unwarrantable and unconstitutional censure on the pro- " ceedings of both houses of parliament, and attempts to question the undoubt- " ed rights and privileges of the lords spiritual and temporal and commons " of Ireland." To which Sir Frederick Flood, though he had voted for the address, objected, believing, that whilst his excellency acted erroneously, he still acted up to the best of his judgment : and the attorney-general mov-

* 9 Par. Deb. p. 128. On this occasion Mr. Grattan would not speak, alleging after a division, that it was a time *for acting, not speaking*, 153. A list of the majority and minority may be seen in the Appendix, No. LXXXI.

ed the following amendment, " although that house could not know the " impressions of official duty, nor the obligation of the oath under which his " excellency felt himself obliged to act, and although his Royal Highness the " Prince of Wales were not yet invested with the powers of regent in Great " Britain." On the division, 78 were for Mr. Fitzgibbon's amendment, and 119 against it.

The motion was opposed principally on the ground of its being considered as the foundation of a vote of censure on the lord lieutenant; and after a long debate, the house divided; for the question 130, against it 71.

Captain Burgh also proposed as an amendment, to add the following words to the original resolution, " in as much as the said lords and commons had " proceeded to appoint his royal highness, &c. illegally and unconstitution- " ally," which amendment was negatived without a division.

On the 25th Mr. Monk Mason reported from the committee of supply, that on 25th of March, 1788, the debt of the nation was 2,240,204*l.* 14*s.* 8*d.*; and when the resolution was read, that provided for the national debt, the annuities, and establishments, Mr. Grattan moved an amendment by inserting the words " two months, ending on the 25th of May, 1789." Upon this occasion, Mr. Brownlow, observed (as the fact was) that he was no party man, neither had he any ends to answer contrary to the welfare of the country, yet he thought it right to proceed with caution; and as it had been been shewn that they had not time to investigate the accounts, that, in his mind, was sufficient ground for the amendment.

The lord lieutenant had thought proper to refuse transmitting the address of the two houses to the Prince of Wales; this had given cause for some difference and animadversion between his excellency and the two houses; the truth was, his excellency was at variance with the two houses, and it behoved them to take care of themselves. He should never forget the affair of Lord Townshend, who prorogued the parliament, and protested against their proceedings, for the commons exercising a right of originating bills of supply; a right in which lay the very essence of all their privileges. What Lord Townshend had done, Lord Buckingham might do, if they passed the supply for a year; nay he might, and perhaps would dissolve them, and then how could they look at their constituents, who would naturally say, you have deserved all this; for when we put our purse in your hands, you very foolishly let go the strings.

Mr. Griffith considered the two houses committed against, and in a state of warfare

warfare with the chief governor, and he could expect nothing less than a dissolution of parliament if the supplies were once granted for a year.

The attorney-general admitted, that (Mr. Brownlow) had fairly and openly avowed his reason for supporting a short money bill; it was to hinder the lord lieutenant from exercising an undoubted right of proroguing or dissolving parliament. He recollected the event referred to by the right honorable gentleman. He recollected Lord Townshend's proroguing the parliament; and he recollected when next they met, they voted him an address of thanks, which address cost the nation half a million of money. He hoped to God he should never again see such effects from party. He hoped to God he should never again see half a million of the people's money employed to procure an address from their representatives; he had ever endeavoured to defend the people, and ever should oppose measures, which might lead to an address that would cost them half a million.*

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* This debate upon Mr. Grattan's motion for a short money bill, most intimately affects a point of modern Irish history beyond any other necessary for the annalist to ascertain. No man can be ignorant of the loud and frequent clamour that has been raised, particularly within these last 20 years, against the corruption and venality of the Irish government and parliament, to the account of which, many have laid an uniform system of oppression, coercion, and cruelty that have occasioned, rather than checked the late outrages and calamities of the nation. Whilst others have founded the necessity of union in the incorrigible inveteracy of these very evils. It will be impossible to form a right judgment upon this leading point, until certain facts are admitted or disproved. The author's duty is to supply his reader with the best evidence the nature of the case admits of. The singular coincidence of a falling and rising power acting at one time upon a body of 300 men, at no time famed for rigid inflexibility of principle, a majority made up chiefly of deserters from habits of ease and expediency, to a promising standard of lucrative principle, a race of ingratitude for past and avidity for future favors, certainly produced an unprecedented opportunity for extracting truths, which might otherwise have lain for centuries smothered under the concordatum of interest, secrecy and combination. The Irish parliamentary debates taken, collected, and arranged by Mr. Giffard, are the chief resource a stranger has for matter upon the latter history of Ireland from the year 1781. If any bias can be supposed to have affected his pen, it will be concluded to have been on the part of government. This gentleman in the outset of volunteering was so conspicuously prominent in the cause of freedom, as to have attracted the notice and acquired the confidence, esteem, and intimacy of the Duke of Leinster: at that time his family was larger than his means, and the favors of his grace were more flattering than lucrative. His talents which were above mediocrity were noticed by government, and he was engaged at a handsome salary to report for the castle, and upon trial of his ability and fidelity to his employers was rewarded by a place in the customs. We have before remarked, that Lord Townshend had, at a very heavy expence to the nation broken up an aristocracy, that before his time had monopolized the whole power of the

The committee of the two houses of parliament arrived in London on the 25th of February, 1789, and the day following presented their address to the Prince of Wales at Carlton-house. As the convalescent state of his majesty's health was at that time apparent, his royal highness, after returning his warmest thanks for the address, and expressing the satisfaction he received from the proof it afforded of their loyal and affectionate attachment to the person and government of the king, acquainted them with the fortunate change that had taken place. Within a few days, he hoped, that the joyful event of his majesty's resuming his government, would enable him to give them a final answer, and make it only necessary for him to repeat those sentiments of gra-

commons, and regularly bargained for terms with every new lieutenant for managing the House of Commons. Mr. Fitzgibbon (and no man knew better), now admitted, *that this manœuvre cost the nation upwards of half a million*: that is, that he had paid or granted so much to purchase that majority in parliament, by which he governed to the end of his administration. We further learn from Mr. Giffard's report of this debate, that Mr. Bushe observed, from what his right honorable friend (Mr. Fitzgibbon), had said, he almost imagined he intended to vote on the other side: for when he had said, that one prorogation and address had cost the nation half a million, he did not suppose he would run the risk of another. That prorogation had taken place for want of a short money-bill, which was the best reason against granting a long one on the present occasion: and as that prorogation cost half a million, as every article had risen, perhaps it would not be unreasonable to suppose a prorogation at the present day might cost a whole million, which expence might be cut off by a short money-bill. It is to be observed, that Mr. Bushe had some time before quitted the ranks of patriotism, and accepted a place under government. I find in another report of this debate, "that Mr. George Ponsonby rose to express his indignation at the idea of placing parliament in the power of the viceroy: he said, that it had already been stated, that a similar measure had on a former occasion, lost that country half a million of money, by which a corrupt parliament had been laid prostrate at the feet of the viceroy. Were they that House of Commons? Would half a million, or a whole million, tempt them to swerve from the duty to their country," (*Dublin Evening Packet*, 25th February, 1789). Of this avowal, or boast or taunt, or threat of parliamentary venality from the mouth of the attorney-general, we have this further evidence from Mr. Grattan, (in his answer to Lord Clare's speech, *Dub.* 1800. p. 18). "*Half a million, or more, was expended some years ago to break an opposition; the same, or a greater sum may be necessary now*: so said the principal servant of the crown. The house heard him: I heard him: he said it standing on his legs to an astonished and an indignant nation; and he said it in the most extensive sense of bribery and corruption. The threat was proceeded on; the peerage was sold; the caitsiffs of corruption were every where; in the lobby, in the street, on the steps, and at the door of every parliamentary leader, whose thresholds were worn by the members of the then administration, offering titles to some, amnesty to others, and corruption to all."

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titude and affection to the loyal and generous people of Ireland, which he felt indelibly imprinted on his heart.*

On the 24th of February, his majesty's disorder had taken so favourable a turn, that the chancellor informed the British House of Peers, that he had on that day attended his majesty by his express command, and had found him perfectly recovered. On the 2d of March, the speaker of the House of Commons in Ireland communicated to the house the letter which he had received from the delegates, with the Prince's answer to their address, which were ordered to be entered on the journals. The happy turn in his majesty's health worked a very happy change in the marshalling of the House of Commons. As the late gloomy prospect of a change in the Irish administration, had driven many gentlemen to the opposition benches, Mr. Grattan was willing to avail himself of the earliest fruits of their conversion : accordingly, on the 3d of March, 1789, he offered to the house a resolution which he thought absolutely necessary, from a transaction that had lately taken place. He thought it necessary to call the attention of the house to certain principles, which the gentlemen, with whom he had generally the honour to coincide, considered as the

* The following was the answer of his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales.

“ MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

“ THE address from the lords spiritual and temporal, and commons of Ireland, which you have presented to me, demands my warmest and earliest thanks. If any thing could add to the esteem and affection I have for the people of Ireland, it would be the loyal and affectionate attachment to the person and government of the king, my father, manifested in the address of the two houses.

“ What they have done, and their manner of doing it, is a new proof of their undiminished duty to his majesty, of their uniform attachment to the house of Brunswick, and their constant attention to maintain inviolate the concord and connexion between the kingdoms of Great Britain and Ireland, so indispensably necessary to the prosperity, the happiness, and the liberties of both.

“ If, in conveying my grateful sentiments on their conduct, in relation to the king, my father, and to the inseparable interest of the two kingdoms, I find it impossible to express adequately my feelings on what relates to myself, I trust you will not be the less disposed to believe, that I have an understanding to comprehend the value of what they have done, a heart that must remember, and principles that will not suffer me to abuse their confidence.

“ But the fortunate change which has taken place in the circumstance, which gave occasion to the address agreed to by the lords and commons of Ireland, induces me to delay, for a few days, giving a final answer ; trusting, that the joyful event of his majesty's resuming the personal exercise of his royal authority, may then render it only necessary for me to repeat those sentiments of gratitude and affection to the loyal and generous people of Ireland, which I feel indelibly imprinted on my heart.”

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indispensable condition, without which no government could expect their support, and which the present government had resisted.

The first was a reform of the police: at present the institution could only be considered as a scheme of patronage to the Castle, and corruption to the city; a scheme which had failed to answer the end of preserving public peace, but had fully succeeded in extending the influence of the Castle.*

It had been thrown out on a former occasion, when he had intimated his intention of reforming the police, that the bill to be proposed would be as bad as that at present existing; but that assertion was not founded in truth. The bill, which he would introduce, was intended to rescue the corporation of the city out of the court, and to make them responsible to the public for their conduct; to restore the peace and liberty of the city; and to guard against any abuse of power in those, to whom the guardianship of that peace and liberty should be committed. This bill had in the last session been stated as necessary, but had been resisted by Lord Buckingham's government; but it should now be soon introduced.

Another principle much desired, was to restrain the abuse of pensions by a bill similar to that of Great Britain. That principle, he said, Lord Buckingham had resisted, and his resistance to it was one great cause of his opposing his government. To this he would add another principle, the restraining revenue officers from voting at elections: this, he observed, was a principle of the British parliament, and it was certainly more necessary in Ireland, from what had lately taken place, where, by a certain union of family interests, countries had become boroughs, and those boroughs had become private property.

But the principle to which he begged to call the immediate attention of the house was, that of preventing the great offices of the state from being given to absentees: that was a principle admitted by all to be founded in national right, purchased by liberal compensation, and every departure from it must be considered as a slight to the nobility and gentry of Ireland, who certainly

* In this debate, Mr. Curran perceiving, that the opposite side of the house regained their spirits and deserters, complimented the prime serjeant on the recovery of his tongue: what the distress and depression of his friend and patron had not been able to produce, his return to prosperity had effected: the learned member was no longer tongue tied: mute during his disgrace, he was clamorous on his elevation. 9 *Parl. Debates*, p. 265.

were better entitled to the places of honor and trust in their own country, than any absentee could possibly be; but besides the slight shewn to the nobility and gentry of Ireland, by bestowing places of honor, of profit, and of trust on absentees, the draft of money from this country, the institution of deputies (a second establishment unnecessary, were the principals to reside), the double influence arising from this raised the abuse into an enormous grievance.

He said, after the nation had recovered its liberty, one of the first objects was to bring home the great offices of the state: these had been taken away in an unjust manner, and in violation of native right, when the country was under oppression. He did not mean to enter into a question, whether too much was paid for bringing home great employments; he would not dispute the price, as it was the purchase of a principle; but the principle being once established, that it was wise and honorable in the nation to purchase home the great offices of the state; and this having been actually reduced to practice in instances of the chancellorship of the exchequer, the vice-treasurership, the clerk of the crown and hanaper, &c. it followed as a necessary consequence, that the granting away again great places to absentees, must be highly improper, and a gross violation of the principle purchased by the nation.

He then adverted to the reversionary patent granted to Mr. Grenville. Of that gentleman's merits in his own country he would say nothing: they could be no reason for granting him a great employment in Ireland, where it was most certain he never would reside; and therefore in condemning the grant, no one had a right to argue, that it was condemned as a grant to the lord-licutenant's brother, but as a grant to a person that must necessarily be an absentee; it must be condemned as a slight, and an affront to the native resident nobility and gentry of Ireland.

He asked the house, were they ready to submit to such an insult? Were they ready to submit to have the principle, which they had purchased violated? Were they ready to return to that state of degradation and contempt, from which the spirit of the nation had so lately emancipated itself? If they were not, they would not hesitate to come to a resolution, asserting the principles, which they had purchased. He would submit such a resolution, worded in the most guarded manner, not attacking the prerogative of the crown to grant, but condemning the advice, by which the crown was misled to abuse that prerogative. He then moved the following resolution:

“ Resolved,

“ *Resolved*, That recommendations for the purpose of granting the great offices of this kingdom, or the reversion of great offices to absentees, are improvident and prejudicial, especially now as great annual charges have been incurred by making compensation to absentees for resigning their offices, that those offices might be granted to residents.”

After a very violent personal altercation between Mr. Parsons and Mr. Grattan,* the latter gentleman resumed his argument, and said, that giving away

* Scarcely had Mr. Grattan concluded his speech, than Mr. Parsons rose to speak; when he was interrupted by Mr. Grattan, who said, that if the honorable gentleman rose to second his motion, he would withdraw it. Upon which Mr. Parsons instantly launched out into a most infuriated Philippic against Mr. Grattan, and his whole political conduct. To this Mr. Grattan made the following reply: 9 *Parl. Debates*, p. 257.

“ Sir, the speech of the honorable member has been so disorderly and extraordinary, that the house will permit me to make an immediate reply. He talks of simple repeal, he does not understand that question; he does not know whether that measure was right or wrong. He speaks of renunciation; of that he is equally ignorant. The merits or demerits of either question, or of both questions, surpass his capacity. He has arraigned my conduct, but his observations are as feeble as they are virulent. The member is a melancholy proof, that a man may be scurrilous, who has not capacity to be severe. He speaks of the public grant of 50,000*l.*; and he says, I got that for bungling, what the patentee was so fortunate to complete. He says so, but why he should say so, or on what grounds he talks, he is totally unable to explain; he repeats a sentence which he has heard, but the force or meaning, or foundation for the sentence, the member cannot set forth; the jingle of a period touches his ear; and he repeats it, and he knows not why. The calumny urged against me by the member, is not his own. (*Dublin Even. Packet.*) Mr. Higgins has said it better than the honorable gentleman; the Freeman's Journal has stated it better, and with much more ingenuity than the honorable gentleman: but Mr. Higgins is a liar; the Freeman's Journal is a liar; it is not unparliamentary to say, that the authority from which the gentleman draws his argument, is a liar, a public pitiful liar! He said, he did not mean that the honorable gentleman was a liar, but that the paper, from which he had borrowed his authority, was a liar, a positive liar!” Here Mr. Parsons rose and stepped towards Mr. Grattan, made use of some words, which, for the honor of parliament, are not repeated. Mr. Grattan sat down. The house immediately called out, “custody! custody!” and the speaker ordered the galleries to be cleared: it was near two hours before order was completely restored.

The character of this Mr. Higgins, who died last year possessed of a fortune of about 40,000*l.* is highly illustrative of the system, which generated, fostered, and pampered this species of reptile more frequently known in Ireland, than elsewhere: *ex uno disce plures*.

This man was known by the appellation of the *Sham Esquire*: he was a singular instance of what may be done in life by strict attention to private ends, without regard to the means, which so often retard the advancement of men of principle. Born of obscure parents, he rose through the successive

away the great offices of this kingdom to absentees, was taking away the property of this country, and carrying it abroad. He asked, what claim had
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five stations of errand-boy, shoe-black, and waiter in a porter's house, to an attorney's clerk, in which situation his talents were not confined to the desk. His master's pleasures found an attentive minister in him, and he found additional profits in his master's pleasures. He soon began to look for money and connexions, and fixed his mind on the daughter of a very respectable and opulent citizen in Dublin, who was a Catholic: he procured an introduction to the family through a priest, whom he deceived, in declaring himself the only son of a gentleman of 3000*l.* a year; the nephew of a counsellor, and a member of the Irish parliament, whose presumptive heir, as having no children, he also was. He feigned a wish to conform to the Catholic religion, in which he had been christened, though educated a Protestant, thinking thereby to ingratiate himself with the family, and was received into the Catholic church. The imposture was soon detected, and Mr. Higgins confined to gaol, where he improved the only real knowledge he ever possessed, which was the lowest art of crown law. He afterwards became an attorney. He then attended gaming tables and brothels. He drew great advantages by lending money to the unfortunate adventurers, and managing to defend or keep off prosecutions from the infamous supporters of those receptacles of iniquity. In his speculations towards advancement, he considered the command of a newspaper as an essential weapon both offensive and defensive. To attain this very necessary article, he insinuated himself into the acquaintance and confidence of the proprietor of a print, then in some degree of estimation, the Freeman's Journal. This gentleman was in very embarrassed circumstances. Mr. Higgins lent him 50*l.* and watching his opportunity when he thought his distress at the height, suddenly arrested him for the money: to procure his liberty, he was glad to transfer to his creditors the property of the paper for one fourth of its value.

This paper had hitherto been prominently conspicuous on the patriotic side of the question, and was therefore the more saleable a commodity in the hands of this new proprietor. He made his terms with the castle; and from that time forward his paper was the most subservient to, and therefore the most favoured by the minister. This man had the address, by coarse flattery and assumed arrogance, to worm himself into the intimacy of several persons of rank, fortune, and consequence in the country, who demeaned themselves by their obsequiousness to his art, or sold themselves to him for his unqualified enterprise in maligning their enemies, or bearing them out of difficulties or disgrace. This man, ready for every job for which he should be paid, under some natural suspicions that the return of the Marquis of Buckingham to assume the vice-regency of Ireland would not be attended by any particular demonstrations of joy, had hired a mob to wait his arrival, and had supplied a proper number of them with silken cords and harness to draw him in his carriage to the Castle, under the fastidious deceit of mercenary popularity and triumph. The opinion of Lord Chief Baron Yelverton upon this notorious character, seals the stamp of it to posterity. In Easter term, upon counsel having reminded his lordship in court, that the printer of the Freeman's Journal awaited the judgement of the court for a libellous paragraph on that court: the chief baron spoke thus to the counsel.

“ If you had not mentioned the affair, the court would not have condescended to recollect its

Mr. Orde for the pension of seventeen hundred pounds a year he had got on this establishment? What claim could any secretary have for either pension or employment? If the principle be admitted, that the giving away of offices to absentees is injurious to the kingdom, then his motion could not be resisted.

The attorney general said, he should be extremely glad to see the whole patronage of the crown in Ireland bestowed upon the members of both houses of parliament, and he had no doubt if things went on a little longer in the train, in which for some time they had been, that object would be obtained.

A very warm debate ensued, in which Mr. Corry and some other gentlemen admitted the principle of the resolution, although they opposed its passing, because it was a censure on the Marquis of Buckingham. To get rid of the question, an adjournment was moved and carried by a majority of 115 against 106. Thus early had the old majority begun to fall back into their former ranks. Still the superiority of votes bore no proportion to 200 and upwards, of which the former full majorities consisted. Mr. Grattan accordingly on the following day (4th of March) moved for leave to bring in *a bill for the better securing the freedom of election for members to serve in parliament, by disabling certain officers employed in the collection or management of his majesty's revenue from giving their votes at such election*. Mr. Beresford gave immediate notice, that he should oppose the bill through every stage, though he would not oppose the motion: and on the second reading of the bill the attorney general spoke thus.* “Sir, I say, that at this time such an act would
“ be peculiarly ungracious: and there is another reason why I will not enter
“ into a measure, which properly modified might be useful at another time;
“ there is, I am well assured, at this moment, existing, an association under
“ hand and seal, to oppose the king's government, and to support the old Irish
“ aristocracy; I would wish therefore to wait for a cooler moment, when
“ gentlemen shall grow ashamed of such a measure.”

“ insignificance, but would have passed it by as it has done every other paragraph, whether of
“ praise or censure, that has appeared in that paper with the most supreme contempt. Let the
“ fellow return to his master's employment; let his master exalt favorite characters; and if there
“ be any mean enough to take pleasure in his adulation, let him continue to spit his venom against
“ every thing that is praise-worthy, honorable, or dignified in human nature. Let him not pre-
“ sume to meddle with the courts of justice, lest, forgetting his baseness and insignificance, they
“ should at some time condescend to inflict a merited punishment upon him.”

* 9 Gif. Parl. Deb. p. 278.

A warm debate ensued, which turned much upon the personal character of the lord lieutenant, and the indelicacy of attempting to cramp the royal prerogative in the particular moment of his majesty's recovery. At the close of it Mr. George Ponsonby said, that a charge had been brought against an odious and offensive aristocracy. He would only say, that any assertion, stating faction to be at the bottom of the present business, was not founded in truth. For his own part, he released the right honorable secretary from every tie of honorable secrecy, and called upon him to say, if he had ever made a refusal of favor a ground of opposition to government. He called upon the treasury bench one by one, to declare in the same manner. [Here he paused for an answer; none having been given] he said, that after that he hoped he should hear no more random charges of faction and party. On this division there were for the attorney general's motion to postpone the bill to the 1st of May only 98, against it 130.

In the progress of the pension bill, it was singular, that the attorney general should oppose it, upon popular and patriotic grounds: the bill, said the attorney general, went to establish by law, first a pension list at the discretion of the minister, amounting to 80,000*l.* secondly, to leave a discretion with the two houses to address for whatever they might think proper as a further charge; and thirdly, to legalize the appropriation of the surplus of the hereditary duties to the purposes of pensions, which would put into the hands of the crown the immense sum of 260,000*l.* per ann. beyond the control of the commons, and must ultimately destroy the liberties of the country, by throwing into the hands of the minister a power to bias every election.

Mr. secretary Fitzherbert, in answer to the attorney general, said there was not a free country on the globe, in which a strong government was more requisite than in Ireland. By the tendency of the right honorable gentleman's arguments it appeared, he had property in that country; he however expressed some surprise at the different ground of argument he then adopted, on the subject of the bill, from what he had used the night before. Then he considered the measure as flying in the face of government; as robbing the crown of its prerogatives; as setting the liberality and curbing the necessary influence of the sovereign: he now held it forward, as placing an extraordinary power and influence in the crown; taking it in this light, he thought

* 9 Parl. Deb. p. 300.

the bill was the greatest compliment that parliament could pay to the sovereign. For his part, he could not see that dangerous tendency, which the right honorable gentleman had annexed to the measure of the bill, for in reality, it only gave his majesty a control over a part of that revenue, which was subject to both houses of parliament; and therefore if his majesty abused that power of control, it was in the power of parliament to counteract that abuse, by refusing to provide; this argument cut up by the roots the doctrine of the learned gentleman. He said, the measure did not go to meddle with the king's prerogative, but merely to set bounds to the system of expenditure, and prevent the ruin of the country.

He then took a view of the increase of the pension list, from the administration of Lord Essex, in the reign of Charles the Second, when it was only 3500*l.* a year, to the present, when it was rated at 103,000*l.* and hoped, if such moderation prevailed in such a reign as that of Charles the Second, a measure of limitation when it was 100,000*l.* more, would not be rejected in the reign of George the Third.

King Charles the Second, at his restoration, availed himself of the unsettled state of that country, by making a bargain with his subjects disgraceful to the monarch, and injurious to the liberties of the people. In exchange for tranquillity and settlement, he stipulated for an hereditary revenue. From this polluted source the disuse of parliaments, and the increase of pensions originally flowed; the latter at first in a small current. In 1669, the amount of those grants was but 3214*l.* and 10,000*l.* yearly having been proposed by the king as the limitation of grants, his representative, Lord Essex, objected to the largeness of the amount, and expressed his apprehensions, that their enormity might be a reason for not granting a supply to his majesty. He approved of a proposal, that they should be kept in a separate list, to the end, that if there should be any deficiency in the public revenue, it should fall on pensions in the first place; and in 1678, the Duke of Ormond received instructions from the king to that purpose. It appeared then, that the limitation, and the amount of pensions was an idea entertained on the part of the crown, and that the sum of 10,000*l.* yearly was, in the last century, thought an excessive charge. During this century, those grants had been the perpetual occasion of contests. In 1703, the committee of supply resolved, and the house agreed, that no less than nineteen of them were unnecessary branches of the establishment; and in 1707, several of them were
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voted to be struck off, and that no pension should be continued, except to a person resident in the kingdom. In the year 1717, the lord lieutenant, in his speech from the throne, informed both houses of parliament, that his majesty had thought fit to lessen the civil list on the head of pensions, and had directed such rules to be observed as might annually abate the expence upon them. By the influx of wealth into the kingdom, arising from imports occasioned by a false credit, which had arisen after the peace in the year 1748, there was a large surplus in the treasury, which occasioned a contest in the year 1753, between the crown and the House of Commons. The ministers insisted, that the surplus could not be applied by parliament without the previous consent of his majesty, and that difference having occasioned an extraordinary prorogation of parliament, the removal from office of some of the principal men in the country, and great additional expence to the public by replacing them, for the sake of tranquillity, profusion was for a time connived at, pensions were lavishly bestowed, and the commons were still more forward than government in that political extravagance. But in 1757, they unanimously voted the increase of pensions to be a grievance, and the house with its speaker laid that, with several other strong resolutions on the subject, before the lord lieutenant, who, with whatever reluctance, was at length obliged to transmit those resolutions to be laid before his majesty. At that period, when the increase of those grants was unanimously impeached, they had amounted in the two preceding years to no greater a sum than 89,481*l*. In the following session of 1759, they had increased to 106,285*l*. in the two years, and yet on a motion that the resolutions of the preceding session had the desired effect, with a view to give a negative to it, but twenty-five members could be found for putting that question. In the beginning of a new reign in 1761, the house was contented with an implied disapprobation by resolving, that those grants exceeded the whole charge of the rest of the civil establishment. In the following session of 1763, the national discontent on this subject became so general, that the lord lieutenant found it necessary to desire the attendance of the principal members of both houses at the castle, and there to make a solemn declaration, to a very numerous assembly of lords and commons, in his majesty's name, that pensions for years or lives should not in future be granted unless on the most extraordinary occasions. Since that period various modes of redress had been attempted by motions for addresses to the crown and for retrenchments. For some years past the present measure

measure had been introduced, but clogged with extraneous matter, which would then be omitted. From that short history it appeared, that the increase of pensions had been condemned by government, and reprobated by the House of Commons; they had been the constant source of national contention, in which it had appeared, that neither lords lieutenants, nor even the House of Commons were to be always trusted with that power. What followed then? Regulate it by law. Such a law would be a great national acquisition. When the country gentleman should be asked by his constituents what has the country gained by the law, he would answer, "Pensions had arisen from little more than 3000*l.* yearly, to the enormous amount of 103,000*l.* yearly. They were then limited to 80,000*l.* with exceptions, of which every honest man would approve. They had stopped the proud waves of prerogative, and said, hitherto shalt thou go and no farther; they had prevented the discredit of the nation by having a charge on the people originate by a king's letter, signed by three lords of the English treasury, persons unknown to the constitution of Ireland. They had for ever prevented the return of that disgraceful day, when the servants of the crown sat in sad dejection, with their eyes fixed on the ground, without a word to say in favor of administration, except this wretched apology, it was not done by this lord lieutenant, you cannot say that we did it. And finally, they had paid a just tribute of regard and affection to their beloved princes of the illustrious house of Brunswick."

He then adverted to a paper, which had been very improperly introduced into the debate, and very unjustly made the topic of the most severe animadversion. He had never seen the paper itself, but he had heard a copy of it read. He would inform the committee what the objects were, and what they were not. The objects were to support the only proper and constitutional mode of appointing a regent for that kingdom, and such other measures as should be the necessary consequence of that proceeding; to resist an attack intended to be made by administration against the vitals of the constitution, by letting in the third estate of another kingdom to legislate for Ireland; to resist those dangerous principles advanced by the advocates of that measure, and which were necessary to be maintained for its defence, namely, that the royal assent to Irish acts of parliament was given under the authority of the monarch of England, and not under the authority of the monarch of Ireland, and that the statute regent of England could rescind the appointment of

of a lord lieutenant of Ireland by the statute regent of that kingdom. The first extinguished the monarchy of Ireland, and the second enabled the regent of England to repel the force of the Irish statute. To resist those fatal innovations, to preserve the dearest rights of their sovereign by defending his great constitutional power of assenting to bills, to prevent the extinction of the crown, and to preserve the independence of the legislature of Ireland, several lords and gentlemen of the first rank and consequence united to support the former, and to resist the latter measures, and to support such honorable men as concurred with them in that conduct, and in the defence of the constitution. Having mentioned what the objects of that paper were, he would state what they were not. They were not to oppose any government, or any chief governor; they were not to prescribe to his majesty what chief governor he should continue, or whom he should appoint or not appoint to that high office. There was no such presumption in the minds of those gentlemen. Their union was defensive: to defend the constitution. He would further declare, that it was no object of that union to obtain office, honor, or power for any man. If ever there were an honorable and constitutional engagement, that was one; if ever there were a great national party, without an atom of faction in it, that was one; and yet how unworthily had it been treated? One gentleman had called it a conspiracy against the state; another, the revival of the old aristocracy of Ireland; a third had termed it a disgrace to the kingdom, an illegal combination, and had politely put them in mind of the journeymen pinmakers, who were found guilty of a charge of that nature, and whipped at a cart's tail. Those shameful aspersions were industriously circulated in the public prints of both kingdoms. It was not his custom to use harsh language. He would content himself with saying, that it was a natural progress for those men, who strove to degrade the constitution of their country to proceed to debase and vilify the first men in it; men who would be the pride and ornament of any kingdom in Europe. In talking of the royal assent, he affirmed, that it was the undoubted right of the King of Ireland to give it by himself or his commissioners in full parliament; that it was also the unquestionable right of the subject to have the royal dissent given in parliament. He thought that nothing but a positive express statute could deprive the subject of that right, and he knew of no statute. There was nothing to that purpose in Chief Baron Yelverton's act; a law which did great honor to its author. In respect to passing bills it had three objects; 1st. Their
passing

passing both houses before they were transmitted; 2d. To compel the lord lieutenant and privy council to transmit them; 3d. To prevent the alteration of them any where after they had left the two houses. These three objects had been obtained for the country by a short, clear, and decisive act; and to the man, who had obtained those great constitutional improvements he thought the kingdom highly indebted.

On the 14th of March the speaker and the House of Commons attended his excellency to the House of Peers, where he made the following speech to both houses.

“ MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

“ WITH the most heartfelt satisfaction I take the earliest opportunity to inform you, in obedience to the king’s command, that it has pleased the Divine Providence to remove from him the severe indisposition, with which he has been afflicted; and that by the blessing of Almighty God he is now again enabled to attend to the urgent concerns of his kingdoms, and personally to exercise his royal authority.”

“ GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS,

“ I have submitted to his majesty’s consideration the surplus, which you have already granted for the immediate exigencies of the public service, and the performance of the national engagements; and I am commanded by his majesty to express his perfect confidence in your readiness to make such further provision, as shall be necessary for the usual support of his majesty’s government.”

“ MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

“ I have it particularly in charge from his majesty to assure you, that the prosperity of his faithful and loyal people of Ireland, from whom his majesty has repeatedly received the strongest proofs of affectionate attachment to his sacred person, will ever be near to his heart; and that his majesty is fully persuaded, that your zeal for the public welfare will enable him to promote, by every wise and salutary measure, the interests of this kingdom.

“ I cannot conclude this communication to you without expressing my fullest conviction, that his majesty’s faithful parliament of Ireland does not yield to any of his subjects in sincere and devout acknowledgments to Almighty God, for the restoration of his majesty’s health, and in fervent prayers, that a long continuance of that blessing may secure to his people
“ the

“ the happiness, which they have constantly enjoyed under his majesty’s mild
 “ and auspicious government.”

Mr. Grattan having expressed his most heartfelt satisfaction in the joyful tidings of the happy recovery of their beloved sovereign, congratulated the house, that the speech from the throne was so worded, and the address so properly moved and seconded as to call for the most cordial unanimity. It was accordingly resolved, that the speaker of the house should attend his excellency with the address* to be laid before his majesty.

When Mr. Conolly on the 20th of March communicated to the House of Commons his royal highness’s answer to the address of both houses of parliament, Lord Henry Fitzgerald moved, that an address of thanks should be presented to his royal highness for his gracious answer; to which the attorney general objected, as a measure unprecedented: but it having been urged by

* 9 Parl. Deb. p. 318.

“ To the KING’s Most Excellent MAJESTY.

“ The humble Address of the Knights, Citizens, and Burgeſſes in Parliament aſſembled.

“ MOST GRACIOUS SOVEREIGN,

“ WE your majesty’s most dutiful and loyal subjects, the commons of Ireland, in parliament assembled, beg leave to lay before your majesty our assurances of the sincere and cordial satisfaction, with which we are penetrated on being informed from the throne, by your majesty’s command, that it has pleased the Divine Providence to remove from your majesty the severe indisposition with which you have been afflicted, and that by the blessing of Almighty God you are now again enabled to attend to the urgent concerns of your kingdoms, and personally to exercise your royal authority.

“ We assure your majesty, that we shall justify the confidence you entertain, that we shall cheerfully proceed in making such provision as may be necessary for the honorable support of your majesty’s government.

“ We should be dead to every generous feeling, should we omit to acknowledge your majesty’s unceasing solicitude for the interests of Ireland, or to second, by every salutary effort, your benevolent wishes for the welfare of your people.

“ The numerous blessings derived to this kingdom from your majesty’s auspicious reign, are deeply imprinted in our bosoms, and sensible as we are of the inestimable value of these benefits, we beg leave to repeat to your majesty, upon this joyful occasion, our most sincere professions of respect and attachment to your royal person, family, and government.

“ We conclude these our fervent congratulations with devout acknowledgments to the Almighty for this signal instance of his goodness, in restoring our beloved monarch to the prayers of an afflicted people and our gratitude for such a mark of the divine favor; is only equalled by the ardency of our wishes for the continuance of your majesty’s health, and that your majesty may enjoy that invaluable blessing during a long and happy reign.”

the whole house, he explained, that he was ever tenacious of the forms of the house; and no man more anxious than himself to testify his respect to the prince. It was carried unanimously. On the next day Lord Henry Fitzgerald reported from the committee appointed to draw up the address of thanks to the Prince of Wales for his gracious answer, that they had drawn up an *address accordingly.

The

* “ To His Royal Highness GEORGE, Prince of WALES.

“ The humble Address of the Knights, Citizens, and Burgeſſes in Parliament aſſembled.

“ MAY IT PLEASE YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS,

“ WE, his majeſty's moſt dutiful and loyal ſubjects, the commons of Ireland in parliament aſſembled, beg leave to offer to your royal highneſs our warmeſt thanks for your answer to our addreſs.

“ With hearts overflowing with the liveliest joy, we congratulate with your royal highneſs upon the happy event of the king's recovery, and the conſequent reſumption of the exerciſe of his auſpicious government; an event highly pleaſing to the ſubjects of the whole empire, but peculiarly grateful to a nation ſo highly indebted to their moſt excellent ſovereign during the whole courſe of his reign; and we rejoice in the reflection, that the father of his people is bleſſed with a ſon, who is likely, in the fulneſs of time, to continue to his majeſty's loyal and affectionate ſubjects of Ireland the bleſſings of his government.

“ Thoroughly conſcious that nothing can add more to that eſteem which your royal highneſs has been pleaſed to expreſs for the two houſes of parliament, than their loyal and affectionate attachment to the perſon and government of the king, we will ſteadily perſevere in thoſe principles of duty, loyalty, and affection, which have ſo happily recommended them to the favourable opinion of your royal highneſs.

“ We feel the higheſt ſatisfaction in finding that what we have done, and our manner of doing it, have received your approbation, and that your royal highneſs is pleaſed to conſider our conduct as a proof of our undiminished duty to his majeſty, our uniform attachment to the Houſe of Brunſwick, and our conſtant care and attention to maintain inviolate the concord and connexion between the kingdoms of Great Britain and Ireland, which we conſider as indiſpenſably neceſſary to the proſperity, the happineſs and liberties of both; and we beg leave to aſſure your royal highneſs, that from thoſe principles we ſhall never depart.

“ We are happy to find that your royal highneſs conſiders our juſt attention to his majeſty's royal family, and the proviſion made by us for preſerving the authority of the crown in its conſtitutional energy, as the moſt unequivocal proofs which could be given of our affectionate loyalty to the beſt of ſovereigns, at the melancholy period when, by an afflicting diſpenſation of Providence, his government had ſuffered an intermiſſion, and his illuſtrious houſe was deprived of its great and natural protector.

“ We have the juſteſt reliance on the moderation of the views, and the purity of the intentions of your royal highneſs, and we have the fullreſt convictions in our minds, that any truſt which could have the moſt diſtant tendency to relax that provident vigilance and public jealousy, which
“ ought

The speaker undertook to transmit the address to Lord Southampton; and then Mr. Secretary Fitzherbert moved to adjourn to the 13th of April. During this interval Mr. Hobart was appointed to succeed Mr. Fitzherbert as secretary. When the house met, according to adjournment, Mr. Secretary Hobart informed the house, that he was commanded by his excellency the lord lieutenant to acquaint them, that his majesty had been pleased to return the following most gracious answer to the address of the house :

“ GEORGE R.

“ HIS majesty thanks his faithful commons for their
 “ loyal and affectionate address, and for their assurances of the sincere and
 “ cordial satisfaction which they feel on the interposition of Divine Provi-
 “ dence in removing from him the severe indisposition, with which he has
 “ been afflicted.

“ Nothing can be more satisfactory to his majesty, than the disposition
 “ expressed by the House of Commons, cheerfully to proceed in making
 “ such provisions as are necessary for the honorable support of his majesty's
 “ government.

“ He receives with the greatest pleasure the acknowledgements of the
 “ House of Commons, of their sense of the solicitude which his majesty can

“ ought to watch over the exercise of power, would not have been acceptable to the exalted senti-
 “ ments of your royal highness, whose understanding and principles are rendered more valuable by
 “ the generous and affectionate heart which animates their dictates.

“ We can with the greatest truth most solemnly assure your royal highness, that it is the ardent
 “ wish of the parliament and people of Ireland to continue to cultivate the harmony and inseparable
 “ interests of the two kingdoms, firmly convinced, that in their mutual perfect freedom they will
 “ find the closest, as well as the happiest bond of their connexion; and we offer our warmest ac-
 “ knowledgements to your royal highness for your recommendation to us to persevere in such a
 “ conduct, and consider your royal highness's recommendation, so worthy the high station in which
 “ you are placed, as an additional proof of your attention to the welfare of both countries.

“ We assure your royal highness, that if any thing could add to the exultation of our minds at
 “ the happy event of the recovery of our most beloved sovereign, it would be the pleasure, which
 “ we feel in reflecting, that the heir to his majesty's crown inherits the virtues of his royal father;
 “ virtues, which every part of your royal highness's conduct, during the late melancholy and trying
 “ occasion, has placed in the most illustrious point of view; and the repeated marks of graciousness
 “ and condescension, with which your royal highness has been pleased to honor the two houses of
 “ parliament, must ever remain impressed in the most indelible characters of affection and gratitude
 “ on the hearts of the people of Ireland.”

“ never cease to entertain for the interests of Ireland, as well as their professions of respect and attachment to his person, family and government.

“ G. R.”

It was ordered to be entered on the journals, and an address of thanks was voted. On the 15th, Mr. Grattan presented to the house, according to order, a bill for the better securing the freedom of elections of members to serve in parliament, by disabling certain officers employed in the collection or management of his majesty's revenues from giving their votes at such elections; which was received and read the first time, and then Mr. Secretary Hobart informed the house, that he was directed by his excellency the lord lieutenant, to deliver the following message to the house:

“ NUGENT BUCKINGHAM.

“ HIS majesty having appointed Thursday the 23d of this instant April, to be observed as a day of public thanksgiving to Almighty God, for that signal interposition of his good providence, which hath removed from his majesty the late illness, with which he had been afflicted; and a proclamation having been issued by the lord lieutenant and the privy council of this kingdom for the solemn observance of that day, I intend to go to the cathedral of Christ Church to attend divine service upon that occasion, and have given the necessary orders for providing convenient places in the said cathedral for the members of this house.

“ N. B.”

On the 21st of April several petitions from revenue officers and others were presented to the house against the bill then pending, which intended to deprive them of their elective franchise, upon which a very long and warm debate ensued. In vain were all arguments drawn from reason, law, and constitution urged by the supporters of the bill; in vain was the example of England set forth in pointed relevancy to that kingdom; in vain was it pressed upon the house, that the bill under their consideration, nearly in the same words, had passed that house with the entire consent of most of the members, who were now taught to exclaim against it, as an attack upon the rights of the people; that such a bill, with the consent and approbation of its present most vehement opponents, had passed the commons, had been transmitted under the great seal of Ireland, and returned under the great seal of England; which, though lost in the lords, had not been rejected upon its merits; but had shared the fate of the ministry, which had espoused it: that the people had

had then lost a good ministry and a good bill. The ferment occasioned in the commons by the late alarm had now nearly subsided : the re-establishment of the old system, and the disappearance of any immediate change in administration, had brought back most of the fugitives to their station, and upon the division there were found only 93 for the committal of the bill, and 148 against it.

On the 25th of April, Sir Henry Cavendish, chairman of the committee on the police accounts, delivered in their report,* upon which they had come to two resolutions: 1st, That it had appeared to them, that the police establishment had been attended with unnecessary patronage, waste and dissipation. 2d, That it was their opinion, that the peace and protection of the city of Dublin might be more effectually maintained at a less expence, and that the present system of the police establishment ought to be changed. And when the speaker put the question to agree to the first resolution, the attorney-general objected. The right honorable gentleman called upon the house to agree to a report founded on evidence from partial investigation, that was *ex parte* garbled or selected. He was strongly rebuked by Mr. Grattan, with the indecency of imputing to a most respectable committee, after a laborious investigation, the foul charge of garbling and selecting the evidence. A violent and intemperate debate ensued, in which nothing new occurred, but the ingenuity of dressing up former arguments: both sides insisting that experience confirmed their support of or opposition to the original measure: this had ever been a favorite object with government, and was vehemently supported by a majority of 132, against 78; and the report at the motion of the attorney-general was rejected.† The house having by this time been nearly marshalled into their former ranks, Mr. Grattan thought it useless to divide them on the second reading of the place bill, on the 30th of April; it was negatived without a division. The only subject particularly interesting

* 9 Par. Deb. p. 394. This report which is singularly curious, is to be seen in the Appendix, No. LXXXII.

† 9 Par. Deb. p. 424. When this debate was over and the division settled, Mr. Conolly said the gentlemen were perfectly consistent, in supporting a ruinous and expensive system of patronage, that they themselves had instituted, and that they were also consistent in now endeavouring to stigmatize the men, who had brought their dark, corrupt, system to light; men, who for honor, probity, and integrity, could not be excelled in his majesty's dominions. But he desired gentlemen not to exult; their exultation would be but of a short duration, as the law complained of must, from its enormity, ere long fall to the ground.

to the history of Ireland, which came before parliament during the remainder of that session, was the subject of tithes: Mr. Grattan having presented to the house according to order, a bill to appoint commissioners for the purpose of enquiring into the state of tithes in the different provinces of that kingdom, and to report a plan for ascertaining the same: he followed up his motion with a very elaborate, instructive, and eloquent speech* upon this important national object. The house adjourned from the 8th to the 25th of May, on which day the lord lieutenant prorogued the parliament, and made a speech of a general nature, without a word of reference to any of the extraordinary circumstances of the session.

Certain it is, that no viceroy ever enjoyed a smaller share of popularity in Ireland, than the Marquis of Buckingham. Either the natural reserve or the hauteur of his character made him personally disliked, even by his friends and supporters. In order to raise an appearance at least of popularity, his creatures procured (not without some difficulty) an address from the county of Westmeath, in which the bulk of his lady's property lay, and which superabounds with the name of Nugent. The example, however, was not followed up by other counties. The restoration of his majesty's health instantly brought back a majority of the late deserters to their ranks. But the viceroy's refusal to transmit the address of parliament was indignantly resented by those members of any independence or principle, who had joined in it. A most determined opposition was the consequence. The imperious mind of the viceroy once more triumphant in the return of his numbers to their posts, was still exasperated that the great popular leaders, chiefs of the clans and possessors of the natural interest of the country were restive to his dictates, and knit by a common principle into a closer and more formidable opposition, than he had hitherto experienced. His excellency lamented, that in spite of his avowed principles of œconomy, he was now compelled to resort to Lord Townshend's ruinous system of purchasing votes by retail, in order to break through this new combination of an Irish aristocracy. No bounds, no reserve, no decency, were kept in this new canvass for parliamentary influence: the market became overt, and the prices of boroughs, and pieces of boroughs, of votes and titles, and peerages were brought to as regular a standard, as bullion at the mint. Not a peerage, not an honor, not a place, not a pen-

* It may be seen in the Appendix, No. LXXXIII. 9 Par. Deb. p. 464.

sion was disposed of but immediately by government for parliamentary interest, influence, or engagements, varying by gradation from the price of a close borough to a vote upon a single question. Every place, office or emolument, that could be resumed by government, were granted out upon new terms for future services. The Duke of Leinster, Mr. G. Ponsonby, Mr. Fitzherbert, and every person holding place, office, or pension at pleasure, were displaced or deprived for having joined in the address to the Prince of Wales. A creation of eight peerages took place, and numerous new appointments were made. It was objected to the Marquis of Buckingham's administration, that notwithstanding his boasted professions of œconomizing for the nation, he had encreased the pension list by 5000*l.* per annum, that by his splitting places, reviving dormant unnecessary employments, and encreasing salaries, he had burthened the nation with the additional perpetuity of 2800*l.* per annum, and had chiefly selected his own family connections and other strangers, some of low and mean degree, for the objects of his bounty, to the exclusion of well meaning and well qualified natives. Most certain it is, that the Marquis of Buckingham generally disliked the Irish, and was disliked by them.

The leaders of opposition had found it adviseable, as has been observed, in order to consolidate their force into a common centre of union, to establish a new political society under the denomination of the Whig Club: an institution highly obnoxious to the castle: they adopted the same principles, were clad in the same uniform of blue and buff, and professedly acted in concert with the Whig Club of England. At the head of this club were the Duke of Leinster, the Earl of Charlemont, Mr. Conolly, Mr. Grattan, Mr. Forbes, both the Messieurs Ponsonby, Mr. Curran, and a number of leading members of opposition in both houses. It was a rendezvous and round of cabinet dinners for the opposition. Here were planned and arranged all the measures for attack on the ministry. Each member had his measure or his question in turn: the plans of debate and manœuvre were preconcerted, and to each was assigned that share of the attack he was most competent to maintain. This club aided by the assistance of some of the popular newspapers, continued to announce its days of dining, to proclaim its sentiments in the shape of resolutions, or announce them obliquely in the shape of anonymous paragraphs. Their speeches generally retailed with point, virulence and acrimony, always turned upon the prolific chapter of government and parliamentary

mentary abuses, were calculated to work upon the passions more than to guide the sober reason of the multitude.* Such in truth has generally been the

* It has of late years unfortunately been so prevailing a rage on both sides of the leading political questions, to attribute to their antagonists false motives, views, and grounds for their conduct, that the historian, who supports the principles of either, will be naturally discredited by those readers, who happen to differ from him in opinion : it is not his duty to adjudge the conduct of the actors in those scenes, which he has undertaken to retail and faithfully to represent. The late Earl of Clare in his speech for the union (p. 59.) has left the following portrait of the Whig Club of Ireland. “ The better to effectuate the great national objects of a limitation of the pension list, an exclusion of pensioners from the House of Commons, a restriction of placemen, who should fit there, and a responsibility for the receipt and issue of the public treasury, a Whig Club was announced in a manifesto, signed and countersigned, charging the British government, as James I. has since been charged, with a deliberate and systematic intention of sapping the liberties, and subverting the parliament of Ireland. All persons of congenial character and sentiment were invited to range under the Whig banner, for the establishment and protection of the Irish constitution, on the model of the Revolution 1688 ; and under this banner was ranged such a motley collection of congenial characters, as never before were assembled for the reformation of the state. Mr. Napper Tandy was received by acclamation, as a statesman too important and illustrious to be committed to the hazard of a ballot. Mr. Hamilton Rowan also repaired to the Whig banner. Unfortunately, the political career of these gentlemen has been arrested : Mr. Tandy’s by attainder of felony, and an attainder of treason ; Mr. Hamilton Rowan’s by an attainder of treason. The Whig secretary, if he does not stand in the same predicament, is now a prisoner at the mercy of the crown, on his own admission of his treasons ; and if I do not mistake, the whole society of Irish Whigs have been admitted, *ad eundem*, by their Whig brethren of England. In the fury of political resentment, some noblemen and gentlemen of the first rank in this country stooped to associate with the refuse of the community, men whose principles they thus held in abhorrence, and whose manners and deportment must always have excited their disgust.”

Mr. Grattan has left the following sketch of it. “ The work complains of the Whig Club. The minister was the author of it. His doctrines and his half million were the authors of it. But clubs of this kind are only preserved by violence. That violence did happen. An attack was made on the rights of the city, a doctrine was promulgated, that the common council had no right to put a negative on the lord mayor, chosen by the board of aldermen, except the board itself should assent to the negative put on its own choice, this doctrine was advanced by the court, to secure the election of the mayor to itself ; in the course of the contest, a minister involved himself in a personal altercation with the citizens : with Mr. Tandy, he had carried on a long war, and with various success ; he was now involved in an altercation more general, in the compass of his wrath, he paid his compliments to the Whig Club, and that club advanced the shield of a free people over the rights of the city, and humbled a minister in the presence of those citizens, whose privileges he had invaded, and whose persons he had calumniated.”

The

the system of taking an ungenerous advantage of the Irish character. A people of quick impulse, ardent sympathy, and inconsiderate resolution, was always ready to anticipate rather than check any plan, that summoned their action or intrepidity.

The public thanksgiving for the king's recovery was attended with every solemnity, that the nature of the case would admit, on the 23d of April, 1789, in the cathedral of Christ's Church : and on different days, particular services were performed in every church and chapel throughout the nation. A most solemn high mass was performed, with a new grand *Te Deum*, composed on the occasion by the celebrated Giordani, in the Roman Catholic chapel of Francis-street. And as a happy instance of the increasing liberality of the times, several of the first Protestant nobility and gentry assisted at it.* On the 5th of May, a most superb gala was given at the castle in commemoration

The contest between the minister and Mr. Tandy, to which Mr. Grattan referred, was as follows : Mr. Tandy at the head of a party of the common council, opposed the election of one Alderman James to this office of lord mayor for the ensuing year, though the choice were almost a matter of course in the order, if not magistrates seniority. Mr. Tandy's opposition was founded upon a charge of his being the slave and creature of the castle. After a long contest which lasted all night, Mr. Tandy succeeded in the rejection of Alderman James, and in the choice of Alderman Howison in his room. This produced an appeal to the lord lieutenant and privy council, to whose ultimate approbation the choice of the chief magistrate was subject. Lord Fitzgibbon (then lately promoted to the seals) presided as chancellor. Mr. Tandy and his chosen alderman attended, with Messrs. Ponsonby and Curran, as their council. Alderman James had the Recorder and Dr. Duignan. The matter was solemnly argued. The council chamber was thrown open as a public court, and extremely crowded with citizens. Several personal asperities passed between the chancellor and Mr. Curran : and some coarse satire was attempted by Dr. Duignan against the scowling eyes, and haggard looks, fallow complexion, and factious principles of Mr. Tandy. The castle looking upon Alderman James as the victim of their cause, strongly espoused his interest : but the law laid down by Mr. Ponsonby, was so clearly decisive, that all that was attempted, was to send the parties back to a new election, which was again decided in favor of Alderman Howison, which was finally confirmed by the lord lieutenant in council. This event gave triumph and exultation to Mr. Tandy as a patriot, a second Lucas, and he afterwards commanded a strong influence in the common council.

* The Catholics, who had received more favors from his present gracious majesty, than from all his predecessors collectively, since Henry II. were gratefully sensible of the favor of God in restoring the health of their beloved sovereign, and were prominently conspicuous in returning their solemn thanks to the Deity. So illustrious an assemblage had never met in a Catholic place of worship in that kingdom since the reformation. Besides the principal part of their own nobility and gentry, there

memoration of the happy recovery of his majesty : but none of those gentlemen were invited to partake of it, who had voted for the address. A marked sign of reprobation was put on their heads : and so strongly was the spirit of party kept up, that in the list of toasts drank after dinner at the castle, the Prince of Wales and Duke of York were purposely omitted.* The extraordinary zeal and exertions of the attorney-general on this late as well as former occasions in support of government, were rewarded with the great seal of Ireland, which had become vacant by the death of Lord Lifford : and he became the first Irish chancellor appointed by England.

The Marquis of Buckingham was little satisfied with his situation in Ireland : for although he had regained a majority in parliament, he never more experienced any share of that popularity, which was sincerely shewn to him on his first acceptance of the viceroyalty in Lord Shelburne's administration : the spirit of party ran so high, and the chief governor grew daily so unpopular,

were present on the occasion the Duke of Leinster, the Earls and Countesses of Belvedere, Arran and Portarlington, Countesses of Carhampton and Ely, Lords Tyrone, Valentia and Delvin, Mr. D. La Touche and family, Mr. Grattan, Major Doyle, Mrs. Jeffries, Mrs. Trant, and several other persons of the first distinction.

* Immediately after the health of the king and queen had been drank, that of Mr. Pitt, as *the friend of Ireland*, was given with three times three. These minute circumstances are noticed, because in Ireland no small importance is annexed to such festive ceremonials, as it has been observed 1 vol. p. 310. The system of creating disunion amongst the different branches of the royal family, was not confined to Ireland. England gave the example. Even the unfortunate affair between the Duke of York and Colonel Lennox afforded fresh matter for family jealousy and difference. The delay of introducing his Royal Highness the Duke of Clarence into the House of Lords arose from that execrable spirit of disunion. That young prince, who graced his exalted rank by a close attention to his professional duties, superadded to his native and acquired endowments, a characteristic warmth of family affection and domestic sympathy. It was proposed that his royal highness should be introduced to the House of Lords by the Duke of Richmond. He modestly and naturally observed, that he had two brothers in the house. It was notwithstanding urged, that he must be introduced by the Dukes of Richmond and Chandos. His royal highness finding his two brothers proscribed replied, that he had two uncles in the house, by whom he wished to be introduced : this was not admissible : the Duke of Richmond was still insisted upon, and his royal highness declined the ceremony, till a sort of compromise was agreed to by substituting the Duke of Montague for the Duke of Richmond.

To these marked attempts at mortifying and humiliating the Prince of Wales, Mr. Grattan alluded in a speech upon this viceroy's administration in the following words, (10 Par. Deb. 16.) " some of those members having committed in Ireland excesses far beyond those which falsehood presumed " to prophecy, to disparage the second personage in these dominions."

that

that to avoid personal outrage, in the month of June he secretly took shipping* for England, and never more returned to Ireland. On the 30th of June, 1789, the new chancellor Lord Fitzgibbon and Mr. Foster the speaker were sworn in lords justices. After so much party difference and dissention in the capital, it was not to be expected, that the peace and tranquillity of the provinces should be increased. The wretched and restless poor in Munster began once more to break out into new disturbances. Whilst they expected redress, the country remained quiet: but after the rising of the parliament and the failure of Mr. Grattan's motion for an investigation of their grievances, the disturbances recommenced, and it was found necessary to increase the military force in those districts, that manifested the most disposition to riot.

The unhappy differences of the *Peep of Day Boys* and *Defenders* so far from being composed or settled had considerably increased, both in extent and rancour since the last year: and it is a lamentable truth, that their enmity was fomented by many of the superior orders, for the diabolical purpose of breaking up the union of the Protestants and Catholics, which had been effected by serving together as volunteers, and was one of the effects of that system, which the government appeared most to dread. Reports were industriously set afloat, and greedily credited by most Protestants of the county of Armagh, who long had been pre-eminent amongst their brethren for their zealous antipathy to Popery, that if Catholics, who had obtained arms, and learned the use of them during the war, were permitted to retain them, they would soon be used in erecting Popery on the ruins of the Protestant religion. Where the flame of fanaticism once takes, it is scarcely to be extinguished but by extermination. The defenders had long and frequently complained, that all their efforts to procure legal redress against the outrages committed upon them by the *Peep of Day Boys* were unavailing: that their oppressors appeared to be rather countenanced, than checked by the civil

* His excellency took shipping from Mr. Lee's elegant villa at the Black Rock. It was observed by Mr. Charles O'Neale, in a debate 10 P. D. p. 118, that if he had not taken a back-stairs departure from that kingdom, he would in all probability have been greeted on his retreat in a very different manner from what he had been on his arrival in Ireland.

power; and that the necessity of the case had driven them into *counter-combinations to defend their lives and properties against these uncontrolled marauders.

* The form of the oath and rules of the defenders, said to have been found and sent to government by the Dean of Raphoe during the administration of Lord Buckingham, shews how far they were at this time organized.

THE OATH.

I A. B. of my own free will and accord, do swear to be true to one another, will assist one another abroad and at home, and there are none to be admitted without the consent of the committee appointed by the said body; and they must in all things be under subjection to the said committee in all things that are lawful, and not otherwise; and all words and signs to be kept secret from all that are not concerned or forfeit this oath, and we are to meet once a month where the committee thinks proper, and we are to spend what is agreeable to the company; and any person giving a lawful reason for his absence, he is not to be under censure; and all persons entering must be under all rules and regulations appointed by the said committee; and as in our former oath we are bound to his majesty King George III. and his successors to the crown, so for this present year 1789, we promise faithfully the same obedience, and also while we live subject to the same government.

Rules to be observed.

1st. There is no defender to strike one another upon any account; or if they do, to be excluded the company as long as the committee thinks proper.

2d. There is no person to come to the monthly meeting drunk; or if they do, to pay sixpence, and to be excluded for three months.

3d. There is no person on any account to swear or speak loud in the company, and for every oath they are to pay what the committee thinks proper.

4th. There is no person that formerly belonged to another body (that is to say, a strange body) to be accepted without a line from the body he formerly belonged to.

5th. There is no person to let any one know who belongs to their body, but those who went under the obligation.

6th. There is no body of men to go to a challenge without leave of three of the committee at least.

7th. There is no body to get a copy of these without the leave of the grand master appointed by the general year's meeting, or deputies appointed by the said grand master, or his committee.

8th. Let no person know no words or signs without being concerned, and they are not empowered to give or make known by either words or signs or tokens any that may hereafter come forth, or make it known to any company or body but ourselves, or our body.

9th. There is no defender to make himself known as a defender after being excluded, under fear of perjury; and each man continuing six months from this day must find a gun and bayonet, with other necessary accoutrements, or be excluded at the option of the committee.

Given under our hands, from the Grange committee to the committee of Barrickarnan, body of defenders No. 1, for the county of Louth.

11

We,

marauders. Whilst these petty, but fatal internal hostilities were confined chiefly to the county of Armagh, it appears, that the defenders had generally remained passive according to their first institution and appellation; and that they only became aggressors, when they afterwards were compelled to emigrate from their country. Their hostility was now at its height: government sent down two troops to quell them, but above fifty on both sides had been killed in an affray before the horse arrived. Tranquillity lasted, whilst the troops remained. But it was impossible, that a large assemblage of men, void of education, prudence, or control, should long remain together without mischief.

A very important change had taken place within the last ten years in the political sentiments of the Irish nation. The American contest for liberty had roused Ireland to think more practically and firmly upon her own civil rights: the fatal misconduct of the British ministry of that day had made them an armed people, and they shortly after became an independent nation. The fruition of recently acquired possessions is ever keener than the enjoyment of those, which have attended us from the cradle. The late civil advantages, which had been acquired either by assertion or concession were firm steps to the Irish to ascend to the perfect level of that constitutional freedom, which was the boast of Great Britain, but from which it still appeared her policy to exclude her sister kingdom. The most complete legislative independence, that could either be demanded or admitted, never would destroy the subordination of the Irish cabinet and administration. Hence the baneful source of Irish infelicity, and the imperious necessity of an incorporate union, in order to eradicate every fibre, from which the most puny sucker of that deleterious system could revive. Notwithstanding all the declarations, repeals, and renunciations on our part, it was physically impos-

We, the committee of No. 18, do certify the bearer, Michael Moor, that he has gone through the rules and obligations of a brother defender; and at his request he desires to be discharged that he may join your body.

Given under our hands, at Dumbanagher, this 24th day of April, 1789.

EDWARD BRADLEY,

OWEN BRADLEY,

PATRICK LEES,

DANIEL M'GOVERAN, Sec.

N. B. Michael Moor's certificate was signed by fifty-one members in addition to the above, who were present, and members of Lodge 18.

fible,

fible, that Great Britain should ever have considered the independence of the two kingdoms as perfectly reciprocal : and it appears, that in proportion to the efforts of Ireland to establish that reciprocity, was the jealous preponderance of Great Britain exerted to defeat it. Lord Buckingham's administration was an eventful æra in the latter history of Ireland. The declaration of American independence, and its successful progress to stability, had not a little contributed to that stupendous revolution of France, which had hitherto exhibited a fair and plausible appearance to most lovers of civil freedom : these examples stimulated the youthful vigor of regenerated Ireland to perfect their work, which they considered as left undone, whilst Great Britain enjoyed a constitutional advantage, of which Ireland was bereft. The contest between the Marquis of Buckingham and the parliament had disjointed and loosened the pre-existing parties, and the recovery of the sovereign had hitherto only brought back to their ranks those, who openly professed to give their services for pay. A more numerous and formidable opposition had arisen out of the question upon the regency, than the castle ever more expected to experience. The nation was generally with the minority, which comprised all the great popular interests of the kingdom : a race was run between those, who commanded any means of strengthening their respective parties both in and out of parliament : on one side patronage and influence were extended through the revenue, through the police and every other conduit, which was connected with the castle : on the other side the spirit of 1782 was revived in the volunteer corps, the Whig club encouraged, and the unpopularity of the late administration exhibited through the nation in the liveliest colors.

Though the Earl of Westmoreland succeeded the Marquis of Buckingham in the government of Ireland, yet it was observed by several of the opposition members, that it was but a continuance of the former administration, under a less unpopular head :* the secretary and most other servants of the crown were continued in office. He met the parliament on the 21st of January, 1790, and his speech turned merely on the common topics. The whole of this session was but a series of fruitless contests for the great points, which the patriots contended they were entitled to by the constitution, and

* So Major Doyle expressed himself, 10 Parl. Deb. p. 233. “ The same measures were continued by the present viceroy, as if some malicious device had shot into him the spirit of his departed predecessor, and that the castle of Dublin was only the reflected shadows of the palace of Stowe.”

had pledged themselves to their country to persevere in pressing upon the government, until they should be granted.

On the second day of the session, as the address was moved for, *Mr. Grattan, though he did not mean to oppose the address, felt it incumbent upon him to avail himself of the earliest opportunity in the session to mark his disapprobation of the measures of the late administration, and to prove to the full conviction of that house, that they had been *ill governed*. He then went into a detail of those grievances, which the country had to lay at the door of the Marquis of Buckingham: he first touched on the increase of the pension list,† and then of the increased expence in the ordnance department,

* 10 Parl. Deb. p. 7.

† This being mere matter of account, I extract it from the papers laid before parliament. Append. to the 13th vol. Journ. Com. p. 271.

A List of all Pensions placed on the Civil Establishment during the Period of the Marquis of Buckingham's Administration, with an Account of the total Amount thereof.

Fitzherbert Richards, Esq.	-	-	-	-	-	-	400
James Cavendish, Esq.	-	-	-	-	-	-	150
Harriet Cavendish	-	-	-	-	-	-	150
Lionel, Lord Viscount Strangford	-	-	-	-	-	-	400
Robert Thornton, Esq.	-	-	-	-	-	-	300
Right Honorable Thomas Orde	-	-	-	-	-	-	1700
Duke of Gloucester	-	-	-	-	-	-	4000
Georgina, Viscountess Boyne	-	-	-	-	-	-	500
Lady Catherine Marlay	-	-	-	-	-	-	300
Honorable Rose Browne	-	-	-	-	-	-	300
Walter Taylor	-	-	-	-	-	-	300
Francis D'Ivernois	-	-	-	-	-	-	300
David Jebb, Esq.	-	-	-	-	-	-	300
Lady Catherine Toole	-	-	-	-	-	-	200
Thomas Coughlan, additional	-	-	-	-	-	-	200
William, Viscount Chetwynd, additional	-	-	-	-	-	-	200
Charles, Viscount Ranelagh, and Sarah, Viscountess Ranelagh, his wife, and survivor	-	-	-	-	-	-	400
Lucia Agar, Viscountess Clifden, and Emily Anne Agar her daughter, and survivor	-	-	-	-	-	-	300
Sir Henry Mannix, Bart.	-	-	-	-	-	-	500
Sir Richard Johnstone, Bart. and William Johnstone, Esq. his son, and survivor	-	-	-	-	-	-	800
Sarah Hernon	-	-	-	-	-	-	70
Elizabeth Hernon	-	-	-	-	-	-	70
Henry Loftus, Esq.	-	-	-	-	-	-	300
Diana Loftus	-	-	-	-	-	-	300
William Colville, Esq.	-	-	-	-	-	-	600

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the latter of which he made amount to 1500*l.* besides 600*l.* pension to an officer* on the staff. Then after having amplified in detail upon every act of the

* When he came to reflect on the extent of official abuses, which the Marquis of Buckingham undertook to reform and correct, great praise must be given to the resolution of any man, that would undertake the invidious though necessary function. Mr. Corry, whom he appointed surveyor of the ordnance, gave the following detail of his lordship's conduct in the outset of his reformation of that department. 10 Parl. Deb. p. 230. The first the public knew of the faults of the officers of the ordnance board, was the taking possession of their offices; but how different was this appearance from the real fact? It is customary for the ordnance board on the arrival of a new lord lieutenant, to make to him a return of the stores and ammunition in the arsenals and magazines of the kingdom. This return had been made to Lord Buckingham when he was first here lord lieutenant in 1782; a like return was made to him upon his second coming. Lord Buckingham was too much in the habit of examining papers, not to observe by the difference between those two returns, that some extraordinary peculation must have taken place; this was enough to direct his attention to the subject; but so far from proceeding with precipitation, he examined a variety of papers, which took up a great part of his time, from January to August, and having fully discovered the peculation, he wrote a letter to the persons concerned, desiring them to call a board, and, if possible, explain and justify their conduct. They did call a board, and thus their guilt being fully proved, Lord Buckingham, well knowing the scene of forgery that was then acting, like a wise and vigorous minded man, took, as it were by storm, the different offices; if he had not, his fame would indeed be gibbeted, and not as now, without foundation. Within twelve hours from the time Lord Buckingham took possession of the ordnance office, an attempt was made to rob it.

It was natural, after the discovery of peculation, to examine whether there was any radical defect in the constitution of the department; it was found there was none, it was established in wisdom. What then was to be done? Not to alter the constitution of the department, but to put men of character and responsibility into the several offices.

As to the nobleman at the head of the ordnance, the slightest glance of suspicion never fell upon him, his ill health made him so frequently absent, that it was impossible for him to scrutinize as Lord Buckingham did. The great misfortune of the office was, that several officers were absent, and those who attended in general, were under the control of the person who was chiefly guilty. Of that person, who in private life, was a man extremely amiable, who has expiated his crime with his life, and to whom, if we cannot extend pardon, yet we cannot refuse pity, I would not speak at all, if not compelled; but being called upon, I must speak as truth demands and justice requires. That person came from Woolwich a private artificer, he was made a surveyor of the ordnance, with a salary of

	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	450 <i>l.</i>
Fair perquisites	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	150
Comptroller of the elaboratory	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	150
For a clerk	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	40
									<hr/>
									790

Yet

the late viceroy, he summed up his charges in the following impressive manner.* “ Such has been the conduct of your reformer. This was the man; “ you remember his entry into the capital, trampling on the hearse of the “ Duke of Rutland, and seated in a triumphal car, drawn by public credulity; on one side fallacious hope, and on the other many-mouthed profusion; a figure with two faces, one turned to the treasury, and the other presented to the people; and with a double tongue, speaking contradictory languages.

“ This minister alights; justice looks up to him with empty hopes, and speculation faints with idle alarms; he finds the city a prey to an unconstitutional police; he continues it; he finds the country overburthened with a shameful pension list; he increases it; he finds the House of Commons swarming with placemen; he multiplies them; he finds the salary of the secretary increased to prevent a pension; he grants a pension; he finds the kingdom drained by absentee employments, and by compensations to buy them home; he gives the best reversion in the country to an absentee, his brother! He finds the government at different times had disgraced itself by creating sinecures, to gratify corrupt affection; he makes two commissioners of the rolls, and gives one of them to another brother; he finds the second council to the commissioners put down because useless; he revives it; he finds the boards of accounts and stamps annexed by public compact; he divides them; he finds the boards of customs and excise united by public compact; he divides them; he finds three resolutions, declaring, that seven commissioners are sufficient; he makes nine; he finds the country has suffered by some peculations in the ordnance; he

Yet he was not satisfied with this, but threatened he would go back to England, to prevent which he was made a commissioner of barracks, 400*l*.

Now as to the peculation, instead of 6 or 8000*l*. look at the documents, and you will see, that in the space of time, which Lord Buckingham examined, about ten years, the defalcation on muskets and bayonets was upwards of 20,000*l*. In the article of gunpowder issued, but not accounted for, 9000*l*. defalcation in gunpowder 26,000*l*. The excess of the profit on gunpowder in four years, bought from Irish manufactures, over what it might be bought for from English, 17,000*l*. Besides these discoveries Lord Buckingham has discovered how 800*l*. a year may, and will in future be saved to the nation in the issue of powder to the several regiments; yet these are things that gentlemen affect to make light of, and blame Lord Buckingham, where he had so much merit.

* 10 Parl. Deb. p. 15.

“ increases the salaries of offices, and gives the places to members; to members of parliament.”

The next attack upon the minister was made on the 1st of February, when Mr. Grattan, after having desired several resolutions to be read from the Journals once more, went over his old ground, and in a stupendous stream of oratory* arraigned the whole system of the late administration, so steadfastly supported

* In speaking of the undue influence of the crown, and the non-responsibility of the Irish minister, he thus expressed himself (10 Parl. Deb. p. 61). “ The advocates for undue influence, who have appeared in England, have admitted it to be a defect, but a defect that would mix with the constitution: the ministers of Ireland have made that defect the only engine of their government; our ministers have picked up from the British constitution nothing but the most corrupt part of her practice, and that they have carried into the most daring excesses. No constitutional bills to heal: no popular bills to pacify. The currency, the pure poison unmixed, unquenched, unqualified; or if qualified, tempered only with revenge. On this principle did the ministers take into their venal and vindictive hand the table of proscriptions, on this principle did they remove, not because the place was unnecessary; they have made unnecessary offices; on this principle did they deprive, not because the pension list was overburthened; they have augmented that list, but because the placemen so removed and the pensioner so deprived had voted against the will of the minister, in questions wherein that minister was pronounced to be unconstitutional, and convicted to be corrupt. On the same principle did the ministry try the paltry arts of division, holding out the aristocracy to the people, as the old accomplice of the ministers, and to the country gentlemen, as the monopolizers of emoluments, as if by the spoil of the aristocracy the minister could bribe away the independency of the country gentlemen, and rob the people of that small, but respectable support, and sink that body into the herd of the cattle. On the same principle did the minister attack the dignity of the peerage, by the sale of honors, and the dignity of this house, by the application of the money to purchase for the servants of the cattle seats in the assembly of the people. On the same principle did they attack the purity of this house, by the multiplication of office, and division of establishment.

“ I will not say the ministers went into the open street with cockades in their hats, and drums in their hands; but I do say they were as public, and had as openly broken terms with decorum, as if they had so openly paraded in College Green, with their business lettered on their forehead.

“ Such has been their practice, and such practice has been defended! Merciful Heaven, defended! We have been taught to believe the Irish viceroys is not to be affected in his situation by the sense of the people of this country.

“ Here you will stop to consider and demand why all this? Why this attack on Ireland? The minister will tell you what caused, but I will tell you what contributed. It was impunity, impunity. You have no adequate responsibility in Ireland, and politicians laugh at the sword of justice, which falls short of their heads, and only precipitates on their reputations. Sir, this has never yet exercised herself in the way of vindictive justice, in the case of Strafford, she was

“ but

supported by the present. He then moved, "That the resolutions of this house against increasing the number of the commissioners of the revenue and dividing of the boards, be laid before his majesty, with an humble address, that his majesty will be graciously pleased to order to be laid before us the particulars of the representations in consequence of which two new commissioners of the customs had been added, notwithstanding the resolutions of this house; and also that his majesty will be graciously pleased to communicate to his faithful commons, the names of the persons concerned in recommending that measure."

Mr. Conolly seconded the motion, and indignantly confessed he was ashamed of himself, when he saw his name enrolled in an assembly, that could first censure, and then support the Marquis of Buckingham; and if he could judge by the complexion of the house, was still determined to sanction his proceedings: he remarked, that the two additional commissioners were not only added to the original number, in despite of the resolutions of that house, but they were added for the purposes of corruption, coercion, and revenge.

The motion was vehemently opposed by Mr. John Beresford, the head commissioner of the customs, and more ably by Sir Hercules Langrishe,* who had

"but an humble assistant, and yet in this country we have had victims, the aristocracy at different times has been a victim, the whole people of Ireland for almost an entire century were a victim; but ministers in all the criminal successions—here is a chasm, a blank in your history. Sir, you have in Ireland no axe, therefore no good minister. Sir, it is the misfortune of this country, that the principles of her constitution have not yet become entirely the maxims of all those, who take the lead in her government. They have no public mind, their maxims are provincial, and this misconception of our situation is not a little assisted by a prudent sense of their own interest. They know that Ireland does not punish: they see that the British court does reward. This will explain why the Irish court prefers a strong corrupt government to a good sound constitution."

* This gentleman in the course of his argument palliated though he did not deny the substance of the charges made by the opposition. He spoke a very intelligible language. "As to the occasional expeaces of the present time, as particularly alluded to, I shall only say, I hope I never was either the preceptor or pupil of corruption, nor the advocate of prodigality. I am sure I never shared in the one in order to practise or palliate the other; yet with every conviction on my mind of the duty of government to observe œconomy, I must say, that critical occasions sometimes occur, in which the most pure and perfect minister can scarcely adhere to it. I am afraid that the recollection of those who hear me cannot furnish an instance of strong dissensions be-

had been longer employed in the collection of the revenue, than any other member of that house. He entered into an elaborate disquisition of the origin, nature, union, and division of the boards of excise and customs, and limitation of the number of commissioners under different statutes, and strongly contended for the total dissimilarity between the periods of 1771 and 1790. The Attorney General and some few other members also opposed the motion. The debate was carried on with great violence till towards two o'clock in the morning, when upon a division there appeared 80 for and 135 against the motion.

The next effort of the opposition was Mr. Curran's motion, "Than an
" humble address should be presented to his majesty, praying that he would
" order to be laid before that house, the particulars of the causes, considera-
" tion, and representations, in consequence of which the boards of stamps
" and accounts had been divided, with an increase of salary to the officers ;

" tween the crown and the parliament, in which, through the progress of accommodation, some
" public expence has not been incurred. These ideas may not, perhaps, be justified on abstract
" reasoning ; but from the nature and habits of man, the fact is unavoidable ; and if it be un-
" avoidable, I think it is pardonable ; and I believe it is unavoidable, because it never was avoided.
" No ! whilst human affairs are administered by human creatures, human passions will interpose,
" and the governors and governed will act under their impulse ; but it is the purpose and the prin-
" ciple, the motive and the magnitude that decide the venality of the action, and that a critical
" emergency may vindicate occasional expence from systematical prodigality. I know very well
" nothing can justify corruption ; the constitution that recognizes influence in the crown, re-
" jects corruption, and though I admit that influence may appear, I utterly deny that corruption
" does. I appeal to the experience of some years, if, on great and interesting occasions, there
" has ever been wanting a sufficient share of public virtue to assert the rights and maintain the
" interests of this country ; neither do I think it very prudent to suggest contrary notions to the
" people, whose peace and prosperity depend on their obedience to the laws they have made. They
" will not be fond to drink of the stream, if you tell them the source, from which it flows is cor-
" rupted ; suffer them to feel that they are happy, that they are free, that they are masters of their
" property, and secure in their persons, and that it is unnecessary for them to feel the parallel, or
" follow the example of a neighbouring people that has been referred to ; a people, who have been
" long bending under slavery and oppression, and are now engaged in a bold effort to obtain what
" they peaceably and perfectly enjoy already. They contended for equal laws and ascertained
" rights ; they had them. They fought for liberty ; they enjoyed it ; and long might they enjoy
" that first of human blessings, unimpaired by power on one hand, and undisturbed by groundless
" suspicions on the other ; and long might the parental vigilance of the right honorable member
" superintend and protect it ; let his constitutional jealousy be ever awake, let it be scrupulous, but
" let it be temperate, let it be severe, but let it be practicable."

" also,

“ also, that he would be graciously pleased to communicate to that house the names of the persons who recommended that measure.”

He prefaced his motion with a speech of much point and ability. The board of accounts had been instituted in Lord Townshend's administration; it came forward in a manner rather inauspicious, it was questioned in parliament, and was decided in the house by the majority of the five members who had received places under it; born in corruption, it could only succeed by venality! It continued an useless board, until the granting of the stamp duties in Lord Harcourt's time; the management of the stamps was then committed to it, and a solemn compact was made, that the taxes should not be jobbed, but that both departments should be executed by one board; so it continued, till it was thought necessary to encrease the salaries of the commissioners in the Marquis of Buckingham's famous administration, but then nothing was holden sacred.

He brought forward that motion, not as a question of finance, not as a question of regulation, but as a penal enquiry, and the people would now see, whether they were to hope for help within these walls. He rose in an assembly of three hundred persons, one hundred of whom had places or pensions; in an assembly, one-third of whom had their ears scaled against the complaints of the people, and their eyes intently turned to their own interest; he rose before the whisperers of the treasury, the bargainers and the runners of the castle: he addressed an audience, before whom was holden forth the doctrine, that the crown ought to use its influence on the members of that house.

He rose to try when the sluices of corruption had been let loose upon them, whether there were any means left to stem that torrent.

The debate broke out into great intemperance from both sides: the division upon the motion was 81 in support, and 141 against it.*

Whatever

* In the course of this debate, a ministerial member (Mr. Moore) had made and repeated his declaration, that against a desperate party, combined to seize the crown, he, if he were a member, would think himself justified in employing all the influence of the crown, for the crown's protection. But the attorney-general thought it prudent to rebut the imputation made at his concurrence in this opinion. 10 Par. Deb. p. 123. “ Sir, said he, I never did insinuate in any way that we should obtain majorities by corruption: such a sentiment never entered into my mind. I trust, Sir, that on my own account, I need not make this declaration; to those who know me,
“ it

Whatever may have been the merits or demerits of the police bill, certain it is, that it was most vehemently supported and opposed by the contending parties, with more than ordinary expressions and means of recommendation and reprobation. In order to give more sanction to the measure, his majesty was advised to mark his personal approbation of their efforts to uphold and improve that system of policy, in his answer* to the address of the commons, selecting as it were this alone out of several objects comprized in the address.

† On the 11th of February, a fresh attack was made upon the ministry, who acted during the whole session upon the defensive. Mr. Forbes called the attention of the house to some particular branches of the public expenditure, in order to prepare the minds of gentlemen for the consideration of the two measures, a place bill and a pension bill, which he proposed to introduce in the course of some few days. He then expatiated at large upon every topic that had been agitated during the course of the session, and concluded with the following motion. “ That an humble address be presented to his majesty, stating, that having taken into our consideration the income and expenditure of the nation, we find ourselves obliged to lay before him certain abuses and misapplications of a considerable portion of the public revenues; that the list of pensions on the 21st of January, 1789, appears to have increased to the sum of 101,000*l.* exclusive of the military pensions, which amount to 6,500*l.* a sum nearly equal to half the charges of

“ it is unnecessary; but I think it necessary to explain, that no such declaration was made on the part of government, otherwise I know, that it would be put into the newspapers, and be industriously propagated through the country, that government had broached such doctrines, doctrines, which I believe, the gentlemen with whom I act, reject and abhor.”

* 10 Par. Deb. p. 135.

The KING's Answer to the Address of the House of Commons.

“ GEORGE R.

“ His majesty has received with great satisfaction, the dutiful and loyal address of his faithful commons; the assurances of their attachment to his majesty's person, family and government, and the disposition which they express to provide for the exigencies of the public service, and to uphold and improve that system of policy, which has been attended with such beneficial consequences to his majesty's faithful subjects in Ireland, are highly pleasing to his majesty.

“ G. R.”

† 10 Par. Deb. p. 190.

“ the

“ the civil establishment; that the pensions placed on the civil and military
“ establishments since the 24th of February, 1784, exclusive of those grant-
“ ed in lieu or exchange of former pensions, amounted to 29,800*l.*; 12,313*l.*
“ of which have been placed on the establishment since December, 1787;
“ that the amount of pensions on the civil establishment has increased since
“ the 25th of March, 1784, in the sum of 16,000*l.*; that many of those
“ pensions have been granted to members of this house, during the pleasure
“ of the crown, in violation of the principles of the constitution, and honor
“ of the House of Commons; that a number of new and additional salaries,
“ in the nature of pensions, had of late been annexed, not only to old of-
“ fices, which had become obsolete and useless, but also to lesser offices, most-
“ ly sinecure, or hitherto considered of so insignificant a nature, as to entitle
“ the holders of such offices to very small salaries; that an addition of 300*l.*
“ per annum, has been lately granted to the salary of the customer of Kin-
“ sale, to commence from the 29th of September, 1789; and a further ad-
“ dition of 200*l.* payable on a contingency, both for the life of the present
“ possessor; an office which has been for years considered as useless and ob-
“ solete, to which no duty whatsoever is annexed, nor any attendance re-
“ quired; that an addition of 400*l.* per annum has been lately granted to
“ the salary of comptroller of the pipe, though 53*l.* 10*s.* has for years been
“ considered as an adequate compensation for the discharge of the duties of
“ that office. That an addition of 150*l.* per annum has also been lately
“ granted to the barrack-master of Dublin. That the persons to whom
“ those additional salaries have been granted, are all members of this house.
“ Humbly beseeching his majesty graciously to interpose, to restrain the pro-
“ gress of a system of expence, which must soon induce a necessity of resort-
“ ing to new loans, and of imposing new taxes.”

The motion was seconded by Mr. Conolly. Each debate grew warmer, than the preceding. Many coarse personalities were substituted for argument. The opposition not only upbraided the gentlemen of the treasury benches with being bought and hired to vote against their own convictions and the welfare of their country, but they taunted them with the want of ability and talent, as well as of honor and honesty. This was highly resented by the attorney-general, who strongly charged his opponents with imperious, turbulence, and overbearing, for no other purpose than to attain that power, which they could not behold enjoyed
by

by others without envy. To which Mr. Forbes replied : he said, that he was not ashamed to declare, that he preferred the man, who contended for power rather than place ; he was not ashamed to confess, that he wished for and ambitioned the possession of power, which might enable him and his friends to effectuate beneficial measures for the country, and obtain a pension, place, and a responsibility bill, and other salutary measures, in support of which, gentlemen, with whom he had the honor of co-operating, had publicly and solemnly pledged themselves. He said, he should ever prefer men who contended for such a power of serving their country, to a set of men who, regardless of principles, characters, and measures, were the indiscriminate supporters of any and every description of men, whom an unforeseen occurrence of circumstances, the confusion of times, or the coalition of parties, might enable to take possession of the government.

* On this occasion the opposition encreased : there being upon the division 92 for the address, against 136, that opposed it.

The

* In the course of this debate, Mr. Monk Mason in defending the pension given to Mr. Orde as an usual thing, undertook to prove to the house, by an historical detail of the secretaryships, that so far from such grants being unprecedented, he should clearly prove to the house, that with the single exception of Mr. Fitzherbert, (that amiable man, whose departure from this country they all regretted) the secretary of every permanent administration, for these last forty years, had been invariably rewarded for his services in that station, at the expence of that kingdom : he had no doubt, that the practice was of more ancient date, but should confine himself to that period, which had fallen within his own experience.

He should therefore begin with the year 1749, in the administration of Lord Harrington, whose secretary, Mr. Weston, obtained as his reward, the office of alnager, for a term of years.

Mr. Weston was succeeded by Lord George Sackville, the son and secretary of the Duke of Dorset, who was appointed clerk of the council.

Lord George was succeeded by General Conway, the late clerk of the hanaper.

General Conway was succeeded by Mr. Rigby, the late master of the rolls.

Mr. Rigby was succeeded by Mr. Gerard Hamilton, whose office of chancellor of the exchequer, they had purchased from him, at the expence of a pension of 2,500*l.* a year for a number of lives.

Mr. Hamilton was succeeded by Lord Beauchamp, who, if he were not misinformed, derived some considerable emoluments from that country, though not in his own name.

Lord Beauchamp was succeeded by Lord Frederick Campbell, a nobleman of too high rank to desire any reward from that country, for the short time he resided in it ; but his successor under the same administration (Lord Macartney) was rewarded for his services, by the government of the Castle of Toom, with a salary of 1500*l.* a year.

Lord Macartney was succeeded by the right honorable gentleman on the second bench, who derived

No character of an individual ever was more material to the interests of a kingdom, than that of Mr. Grattan to those of Ireland. Of the unrivalled powers of his mind, there never were two opinions. If these sheets have fairly (though faintly) recorded his exertions in favor of his country, up to the year 1782, it is presumed, that the judgment of the whole British empire upon his public conduct up to that period, will be in strict unison with that of his country, which then rewarded his fidelity and talents with a patriotic donation of 50,000*l.* From that great epoch in Irish history, no character has ever been more variously represented than that of Mr. Grattan. A man covered with the most honorable trophies of a grateful country, must in the jarring conflicts of political convulsions stand exposed to the shafts of ambition, fear, jealousy, envy and revenge. The spirit of party rose to an unprecedented height under Lord Buckingham's administration, and Mr. Grattan uniformly opposed the principles and measures of that system. One part of the nation supported and looked up to him with enthusiasm as the grateful and faithful servant, the true friend and ablest advocate of his

rived some advantages from his services in that station; though perhaps, not adequate either to his own merit, or Mr. Mason's good wishes.

The right honorable gentleman was succeeded by Sir Richard Heron, who held an employment in the port of Cork, worth 800*l.* a year.

From the time of Lord Buckinghamshire, till the arrival of the Duke of Rutland, the government of that country was continually changing; their secretaries were merely birds of passage; but Mr. Orde, who obtained the pension in question, as a reward for his services, which he well deserved, resided in that kingdom for three years, in times of difficulty and confusion; devoting the whole of his attention, and even sacrificing his health, to an anxious desire, not only of promoting the present welfare of that country, but that of the rising generation also.

A very short, but singularly emphatical speech of Mr. O'Neil in this debate ought not to pass unnoticed. "10 Par. Deb. p. 210. He thought it wholly unnecessary for gentlemen on the other side, to adduce a single argument upon any question, while they had an omnipotent number of 140 to support them. On the subject of influence, the denial of it, he said, was ridiculous, as there was not a lady then sitting at tea in Dublin, who, if she were told that there were 120 men in that house, composed of placemen and pensioners, would not be able to say how the question would be decided, as well as the tellers on the division. He said the very first act in every session of parliament, which was the bill of supply, went to raise the interest for a million and a half of money for ministers to divide amongst themselves. I do say, and I say it prophetically," continued he, "that the people will resist it. The members of this house bear but a small proportion to the people at large. There are gentlemen outside those doors, of as good education and of as much judgment of the relative duties of representation, as any man within doors, and matters are evidently ripening, and will shortly come to a crisis."

country. The other part (the less numerous and the more opulent) considered and represented him as a factious ingrate, a secret and dangerous enemy, and little short of an avowed traitor to his king and country. As he headed the most determined opposition ever made against the Irish government, his conduct has been scrutinized with censorious scrupulosity. He was the founder and promoter of the Whig Club of Ireland: and from his proposal, did the members pledge themselves to each other, not to accept offices under any administration, that would not support, until they obtained for the people, a pension bill, a place bill, a responsibility bill, and a bill to prevent the revenue officers from voting at elections. In this debate upon Mr. Forbes's motion, Mr. Grattan in reply to some observations made from the treasury bench on the subject of party, distinctly disclosed the objects, which he and his friends professed to have in view.*

The

* 10 Par. Deb. p. 216. We have been called, said he, the tail of a British faction: by whom? By those, or the followers of those, who owe their livelihood, or their first elevation to what they call that British faction: by those who have received 1, 2, or 3000*l.* a year from that British faction; whose numerous families have been fed by that British faction; or whose introduction into political life was first due, and the consequences, therefore, in some degree, to be attributed to that British faction. There is not one gentleman in the present Irish administration who is really confidential, that is not bounden by the closest relationship or the greatest political pecuniary obligations to that British faction; nor is there any one of them or of those, who act under them, that would not be the humble servant of that British faction, if the keys of the treasury were once more in their hands; nor is there any one of them, who would not, and does not now, for his private interest, personally and privately court that British faction. When such men revile that body, and instigate their friends, and followers and retainers, to revile that body, such men do not acquit themselves of the charge of party, but convict themselves of the basest ingratitude and vilest adulation; they prove themselves willing to offer their wretched incense to whomsoever shall be in power; to those from whom they now receive wages, and therefore fawn on, at the expence of those, from whom they did receive wages, from whom they are ready to receive wages, but from whom, at this particular moment, they receive wages no longer; and therefore such men are not above party, but so very mercenary and menial as to be below faction. Just so, the coachman who drives the minister; he serves secretary after secretary, he is handed down from master to master, and he enquires not into the principles of any, but receives wages from all; and his justification is, that he is a servant: but should he, servant as he is, like some of you, revile these masters who have paid him, then he would be a faithless hireling, and not an honest servant.

Sir, I will tell gentlemen, what description of party is beneficial; a party united on public principle, by the bond of certain specific public measures, which measures cannot be carried by individuals, and can only succeed by party.

I will

The next plan of attack fell to the lot of Mr. George Ponsonby, who after he had gone over the old course of popular grievances, finished with this observation, that as they had declared from the opposite benches, that they would avow and defend every measure of Lord Buckingham, there was little hope of his succeeding in his motion, though he had observed that the transcendent abilities of Mr. Grattan had, on the last debate, increased the number of those, who voted on their side of the house. His motion was :
 “ To represent to his majesty, that his faithful commons having taken into
 “ consideration the growth of public expence in the last year, could not but
 “ observe many new and increased salaries, annexed to offices granted to
 “ members of this house, no fewer in number than fourteen; that so rapid
 “ an increase of places, together with the number of additional pensions,

I will state some of ours, a pension bill, a place bill, a repeal of the present Dublin police bill, a responsibility bill, that is, a bill requiring the acts of the executive power to be signed by certain officers resident in Ireland, who shall be with their lives and fortunes, responsible to this kingdom in the measures and expences of government; also a bill to preserve the freedom of election, by disqualifying revenue officers; and further a total demolition of the new charges created by the Marquis of Buckingham. These are some of the measures which we, if we should have power, are pledged to the public to carry into specific execution. I read them the rather, because *litera scripta manet*, the public hears and will record.

These are some of our measures: I now turn to administration, and call upon them to state their measures; what bills for the public good? State them; come forth; I pause to give them time to consider. Well, what are they? Not one public, constitutional, or wise regulation, there they sit under the public eye; a blank, gutted, excavated, and eviscerated of any one single, constitutional, or æconomic bill, principle or project for the good of the community.

Sir, I will give these gentlemen of administration, on this topic of party, the greatest advantage they can in their situation receive. I will draw a veil over the past, and forget the specific services which we have performed, and those which we are pledged to perform for the good of the country. I will also forget the injuries, which they and their abettors have at different times inflicted, and are this hour inflicting on the community; let us start as it were anew, set name against name, and we will beat them down by character.

I have submitted a description of a party which I conceive to be a public benefit. I will state to you a description of a party which I conceive to be the public curse; if party it can be called, which is worse than a faction, and nothing more than an impudent phalanx of political mercenaries, coming from their little respective offices to vote for their bribe and vapour for their character, who have neither the principles of patriotism, nor ambition, nor party, nor honor: who are governed not by deliberation, but discipline; and licking the hands that feed, and worshipping the patron that bribes them. Degraded men, disgraceful tribe! When they vote for measures, they are venal; when such men talk against party, they are impudent.

“ could not but alarm the house; and though they never could entertain a
 “ doubt of his majesty’s affection and regard for his loyal kingdom of Ire-
 “ land, yet they feared, that his majesty’s servants might, by misinforma-
 “ tion, so far have abused his majesty’s confidence, as to have advised such
 “ measures for the purpose of increasing influence.”

Mr. Grattan seconded the motion; which after a warm debate till one o’clock, was negatived by a majority of 146, against 87.

Not only the actual opposition given to the system of government by Mr. Grattan was displeasing to them, but the perseverance and powerful talents, with which he now kept up an aggressive warfare, rendered him personally obnoxious in proportion as he became formidable to his opponents. On no occasion during the session did he press the ministers more closely, than on the 20th of February, when he opened upon them a new battery, for which they had not been prepared. He rose unexpectedly in the house, and without any preface thus accosted the chair.

* “ SIR,

“ WE persist to combat the project to govern this country by corruption.
 “ We have hitherto contended against those parts of the system, which pro-
 “ ceeded to undermine the constitution, without an apparent breach of the
 “ law, and therefore, might impose on the public as a government by law;
 “ such was the addition of two unnecessary commissioners; such were
 “ the unnecessary salaries for four officers of the stamps; such were the addi-
 “ tional salaries to four officers of the ordnance; such, in short, the crea-
 “ tion of fourteen new parliamentary places, and of eight or nine parlia-
 “ mentary pensions, in the course of less than twelve months. These mea-
 “ sures import their own criminality, and bespeak on the part of his ma-
 “ jesty’s ministers, a design to govern this country by sapping the founda-
 “ tion of her liberty. They called upon us to disallow them, they called
 “ upon us to withdraw our confidence from the ministers by whom they were
 “ imposed; but they went no further. They did not appear to be accom-
 “ panied with any overt act, whereby the criminal designs of their authors
 “ could be substantiated by evidence enough to punish their persons; they
 “ were good reasons for dismissing the ministers for ever from his majesty’s
 “ councils, but not grounds for personal punishment.

* 10 Par. Deb. p. 264.

“ But

“ But there is another part of this project, wherein his majesty’s ministers
 “ have not only attempted to undermine the constitution, but have actually
 “ broken the laws ; for that part of the project, we conceive his majesty’s
 “ ministers to be impeachable. Sir, the sale of honors is an impeachable of-
 “ fence ; the crime speaks itself. But to take the point out of doubt, I will
 “ state to you a case ; the Duke of Buckingham, in the reign of Charles I.
 “ was impeached on thirteen articles, and the ninth article was the sale of
 “ honors ; the very crime, of which the ministers of Ireland have been guilty.
 “ He was impeached for the sale of a peerage to Lord Roberts for 10,000*l*.

“ The House of Commons in support of the impeachment, stated the
 “ heinousness of perverting the ancient and honorable way of obtaining
 “ titles of honor. They urged the crime of taking away from the crown,
 “ the fair and frugal way of rewarding great and deserving servants. They
 “ stated the crime of shuffling promiscuously and confusedly together, those
 “ of inferior alloy, with those of the purest and most generous metal. They
 “ urged, that it was a prodigious scandal to the nation, and that for such
 “ offence, precedent there was none, and then they call for justice on the
 “ head of that man, who by making honor saleable, had rendered it con-
 “ temptible.

“ But there is a circumstance in the offence of the Irish ministry, which
 “ is not to be found in the case of the Duke of Buckingham ; they have ap-
 “ plied the money arising from the sale to model the House of Commons ;
 “ this is another impeachable offence ; that minister who sells the honors of
 “ one house to model the representation of the other, is impeachable for the
 “ last offence as well as the first ; he makes a wicked, and scandalous, and
 “ illegal use of the prerogative of the crown, in order to destroy the privi-
 “ leges of parliament. He makes the two houses of parliament auxiliary, not
 “ to support, but to contaminate one another. Thus he is a conspirator against
 “ the legislation ; attacking it in both houses of parliament, and poisoning
 “ the two great sources of the law. But this practice corrupts also the dis-
 “ pensation of justice as well as the fountains of the law ; the sale of a peer-
 “ age, is the sale of a judicial employment of the highest judicial situation ;
 “ a situation, whose province it is to correct the errors of all other courts ;
 “ such a sale goes against the common law, and against the spirit of every
 “ statute made on the subject.

“ I say the present ministers of this country cannot govern Ireland, they
 “ cannot

“ cannot govern Ireland for England ; I do not call corruption government,
 “ not the carrying a question at the loss of their money and character. They
 “ have then procured for British government, neither character sufficient to
 “ command respect, nor revenue sufficient to pay the establishment ; but
 “ then they have gotten other strength, they have gotten the support and
 “ good will of the nation. No, the loss of the nation’s good will is syno-
 “ nymous with the loss of reputation.

“ The independent country gentlemen never can support a minister who
 “ practises extravagance and professes corruption ; supporting such a minis-
 “ ter they would be country gentlemen no longer, they would be the ser-
 “ vants of the castle out of livery. They must see and despise the pitiful
 “ policy of buying the country gentlemen, by an offer to wrap them up in
 “ the old cast-clothes of the aristocracy. A clumsy covering and a thin dis-
 “ guise, never the object of your respect, frequently the subject of your de-
 “ rision ; the country gentleman must recollect how seldom he can procure
 “ even an audience from that bench, except when he artificially deserts his
 “ cause and his country. Place him on his native hills, and he is a protec-
 “ tion against the storm ; transplant him to the hot-bed of the castle, he de-
 “ generates and becomes a weed.

“ As to the aristocracy, I will not say you have alienated every member
 “ of that body ; but I do say, you have alienated as great, as respectable,
 “ and as formidable a part of that body, as ever stood in the phalanx of
 “ opposition ; and you have not only given them every personal provocation,
 “ but every public topic, and every public provocation to raise on their side,
 “ the interest, the feelings, and the voice of the community. You have
 “ not, however, left yourselves without some part of the aristocracy of the
 “ country, but that part you have endeavoured to leave without any kind
 “ of reputation, by directing against the aristocracy of Ireland in general,
 “ the whisper of your castle, and the scurrility of your press, reducing all
 “ men to the level of your own reputations. Thus, the result of your pro-
 “ ject has been to render British government in this country, as feeble and
 “ contemptible, as the tendency of your project is to render the Irish con-
 “ stitution corrupt and dependant. For the sake of both nations, therefore,
 “ we oppose it ; but how defeat this project ? Certainly not by a plan of
 “ self-defence. It is a maxim of war, that the body that is ever attacked,
 “ and only defends, must finally be subdued, it is then on a principle of
 “ self-

“ self-preservation, that we resort to the good old method of impeachment.
 “ We have long disputed about this pension and that place, until inch by
 “ inch we are driven into our trenches by a victorious enemy. It is now
 “ necessary to change our system of action, and to come forth with the
 “ power of the constitution to punish the enemies thereof. We call this
 “ house, whose foundation the minister now undermines, to witness that we
 “ are compelled to this, and that these men have, by a multiplication and
 “ repetition of plunder, prodigality, corruption, insult, outrage and misde-
 “ meanours, brought forth at last the reluctant justice of the nation. The
 “ great influences, which the philosopher tells you are necessary to bind to-
 “ gether the moral system are wanting here. The influence of opinion, of
 “ future and sublumary punishment: the two first the minister disregards; be
 “ it our province to introduce into this region the last, that his majesty’s
 “ ministers may be sensible there is a vindictive justice, and that there is in
 “ this country a power competent to inflict that justice upon them. Gentle-
 “ men come over to this country for a livelihood, and they find servants
 “ who, like themselves, look to government for nothing but a livelihood,
 “ and this alliance, that does not include an idea of public care or duty,
 “ they call an administration; but it is our task to interrupt this venal com-
 “ merce by impeachment. Had the people of England only condemned
 “ ship money, they had done nothing. No, they brought forth to public
 “ punishment the projectors, they exhibited the malefactor at the bar of the
 “ nation. The injuries you have suffered, demand a spectacle of that kind; a
 “ state offender kneeling at the bar of the lords, and impeached in the name,
 “ and on the behalf of the commons of this realm. I therefore move you,
 “ That a select committee be appointed to inquire, in the most solemn
 “ manner, whether the late or present administration have entered into any
 “ corrupt agreement with any person or persons, to recommend such person
 “ or persons to his majesty as fit and proper to be by him made peers of this
 “ realm, in consideration of such person or persons giving certain sums of
 “ money to be laid out in procuring the return of members to serve in par-
 “ liament, contrary to the rights of the people, inconsistent with the inde-
 “ pendence of parliament, and in violation of the fundamental laws of the
 “ land.”

This very severe and pointed attack was resisted by the chancellor of the
 exchequer for want of evidence to ground any specific charge upon: simple
 assertion

assertion and common fame were totally insufficient: therefore, to the crime alleged, they pleaded not guilty, and put themselves upon their country to be judged by their actions. The prime serjeant found the motion of so extraordinary a nature, of such alarming magnitude and novelty, and introduced in so strange a manner, that no man could, consistently with the principles of justice, or the dictates of his conscience accede to it. When the attention of the house was bespoke for that day, gentlemen, according to the usual course of parliamentary proceedings, requested to know the intended subject of debate: all information was withholden, and a general reference made to the former debates. If the minister in either country should introduce a proposition of so much novelty without a previous information, there would be stronger ground than common fame to suspect an intention to surprize the house: if the measure be so self-evident, why had it been kept back, and introduced after five days preparation, with a reference to several authorities to support its propriety? And among others, one from the inauspicious reign of Charles I.: a reign, in which the other house of parliament was voted useless, and which terminated in the sacrifice of the king to hypocrisy and faction. If any better authority could be produced, the honorable member would have recurred to it: but even that precedent, as cited, did not go so far as to say, that the House of Commons of that day, instituted a committee to fish for evidence, whereon to ground an accusation: a species of proceeding, in his judgment, inadmissible.

A very severe debate ensued, about the close of which, Mr. Grattan rose to reply; he was indignant, that it should have been said in debate, that the facts rested upon his simple assertion. "Will you," said he, "rest it on that?" "Will you maintain it is only a simple assertion? I do not assert only, that, I have heard it commonly said, and specially stated, the sums, the persons, the circumstances; but I said I never heard it out of these walls denied. It is a crime as generally known, and as publicly reported, as any thing, which is not yet reduced to special conviction; it is a crime we offer to prove; we come here to arraign the ministers of the crown. I will read the charges which I make against them." He then read the following paper.

"We charge them publicly, in the face of their country, with making corrupt agreements for the sale of peerages, for doing which, we say they are impeachable; we charge them with corrupt agreements for the dis-

posal

“posal of the money arising from the sale, to purchase for the servants of the castle, seats in the assembly of the people; for doing which we say they are impeachable; we charge them with committing these offences, not in one, nor in two, but in many instances, for which complication of offences, we say they are impeachable; guilty of a systematic endeavour to undermine the constitution in violation of the laws of the land. We pledge ourselves to convict them. We dare them to go into an enquiry. We do not affect to treat them as other than public malefactors. We speak to them in a style of the most mortifying and humiliating defiance. We pronounce them to be public criminals. Will they dare to deny the charge? I call upon, and dare the ostensible member to rise in his place, and say on his honor, that he does not believe such corrupt agreements have taken place. I wait for a specific answer.” After some pause, Mr. Secretary Hobart replied, that if he could think the right honorable gentleman had any right to ask him the question he had proposed, and were he alone concerned in it, he should find no manner of difficulty in answering him; but as it was a question, which related to the exercise of his majesty’s undoubted prerogative, it would ill become him, upon the investigation of an individual, to say what were the reasons, which had induced his majesty to bestow upon any person those honors, which the crown alone could constitutionally confer. As to the charge that had been made, he could not avoid expressing some surprize, that gentlemen were not sufficiently alarmed by common fame at the end of Lord Northington’s administration, to bring forward such a charge then. Common fame certainly did then report, that peerages had been notoriously granted in return for seats in the Commons House of parliament; yet the right honorable gentleman and his friends were in the confidence of that administration, and must be presumed to be informed of the fact. On which, Mr. Conolly remarked, that his right honorable friend had asked a plain, unequivocal, direct question, and the house was to judge whether he had received an intelligible and satisfactory answer. The division was 144 against, and 88 for the motion.

Another strong attack was made on the system of the new police, in a very heated debate, that arose upon the order of the day (24th February) for going into a committee on the bill to continue an act passed in the 27th year of his present majesty, intituled, “An act for the better execution of the law and preservation of the peace within counties at large.”

* When Mr. Forbes moved the place bill to be read a second time, he shortly observed, that to expatiate on the necessity of the bill before the house would be idle, when it was recollected, that no less than one hundred and four persons, holding places or pensions, were members of that house. If authority were necessary to justify the bill, authority was not wanting; for more than fourscore years Great Britain had experienced its beneficial effects; it was a principle annexed as part of the conditions of placing on the throne the family of Brunswick; it was a principle interwoven with the revolution, and considered as essential to the preservation of the people's liberty; and if these reasons were not sufficiently strong, he would add one more: since the last session of the Irish parliament, no less than fourteen new places had been created, and bestowed upon members of that House of Commons.

The chancellor of the exchequer expected the honorable gentleman would have urged some new or strong argument for adopting so strong a measure as a total change in the principles of their government. The honorable gentleman had said, that they had the example of England before them; but in England tenfold precaution was necessary, because in England the patronage of the crown was ten times greater than it was in that country.

The heat of this debate exceeded that of any one of the session†, and the opposition was the largest, viz. 96 against 143.

Another

* 10 Par. Deb. p. 329.

† In this debate Mr. Grattan held the following strong language. 10 Par. Deb. 340. " Sir, I cannot avoid observing, that in this day's debate, gentlemen on the other side of the house have adopted a certain tone of power, I presume in consequence of a very indecent and disorderly interposition on the part of one, who does not belong to this house, though he has lately interfered in its proceedings. Sir, I am not uninformed to what length that person went within these walls, even during the debates of this house; it seems to me somewhat strange, that gentlemen on the other side should dwell so much on the necessity of parliamentary decorum, when they have been evidently spirited up by an interposition, which in itself was the grossest violation of parliamentary decency. Sir, I have been told it was said, that I should have been stopped, should have been expelled the commons, should have been delivered up to the bar of the lords for the expressions delivered that day.

" I will repeat what I said on that day: I said that his majesty's ministers had sold the peerages, for which offence they were impeachable. I said they had applied the money for the purpose of purchasing seats in the House of Commons for the servants or followers of the castle, for which offence I said they were impeachable. I said they had done this, not in one or two, but in several

Another very long and interesting debate took place upon the legality of issuing *FIATS* for levying unascertained damages. One Magee*, the printer of a paper, whilst under a criminal prosecution at the suit of Mr. Higgins, was confined to gaol upon different *fiats*, signed by Lord Clonmel, to the amount of 7800*l.* He had petitioned parliament: a committee had been appointed, and Mr. George Ponsonby moved, "that it was the opinion of the committee, that the issuing writs from courts of justice in actions of slander or defamation, where the sum of damages could not be fairly ascertained, and holding persons to special bail in excessive sums thereon, is illegal and subversive of the liberty of the subject." The motion, however, was lost by a majority of 125 against 91.

Similar divisions after long and heated debates, determined the fate of the responsibility and pension bills. In the debate of the preceding evening, the

"veral instances, for which complication of offences I said his majesty's ministers were impeachable, as public malefactors, who had conspired against the common weal, the independency of parliament, and the fundamental laws of the land; and I offered, and dared them to put this matter in a course of enquiry. I added, that I considered them as public malefactors, whom we were ready to bring to justice. I repeat these charges now, and if any thing more severe were on a former occasion expressed, I beg to be reminded of it, and I will again repeat it. Why do you not expel me now? Why not send me to the bar of the lords? Where is your adviser? Going out of the house I shall repeat my sentiments, that his majesty's ministers are guilty of impeachable offences; and advancing to the bar of the lords, I shall repeat those sentiments, or if the tower is to be my habitation, I will there meditate the impeachment of these ministers, and return not to capitulate, but to punish. Sir, I think I know myself well enough to say, that if called forth to suffer in a public cause, I will go farther than my prosecutors, both in virtue and in danger."

* 10 Par. Deb. p. 863. One *fiat* for 4000*l.* was issued against him on the affidavit of Mr. Daly, the manager of the Dublin theatre, who swore, that certain malicious paragraphs had appeared in Magee's newspaper, in consequence of which he had suffered damages to the amount of 4000*l.*; particularly, that his four daughters and one son had suffered that loss in their future prospects in life by the representations made in that paper that he gained a livelihood by gaming. Another *fiat* had issued for 800*l.* on an affidavit of one Brennan, who estimated his loss at that sum for having been accused of keeping a house of reception. A third issued for 1000*l.* on the affidavit of Miss Fanny Tracey, (the residuary legatee of Mr. Higgins) who swore, that she believed she had suffered to the amount of that sum by an insinuation in that paper, that she was better acquainted with a certain gentleman, than she ought to be. And a fourth had issued for 1000*l.* on the affidavit of Mr. Higgins, that his character (quod vide, p. 256, vol. 2. in a note) had suffered to that amount, from certain malicious insinuations contained in Magee's papers. Magee's case was taken up very warmly by the public, and this failure in parliamentary relief, in which he had been very sanguine, tended to encrease the unpopularity of government.

gentlemen of the opposition had been called upon from the treasury bench, with an air of authority, to account for their very extraordinary conduct, during the whole of that session of parliament. It certainly was an unpleasant session to the minister. On the 6th of March, Mr. Curran rose to make his promised motion; which he prefaced with a long and animated speech. In answer to the recent call from the opposite treasury benches, he said, on their conduct he was not afraid to appeal solemnly to the sense of the people, at the eve of a political dissolution, when the members of the house were about to be refunded to the great mass of the people, and to give an account, whether they had been remiss in their parliamentary vigilance, slumbered upon their posts, or betrayed the passes of their constitution. He said, gentlemen on his side of the house had been accused of invective: it was not their wish to shield, but scourge venality. He decried the invective, that could call a blush into the cheek of virtue or innocence; but the invective complained of, was the last resource, which God had left to injured virtue, and he gloried in the name of being one of its dispensers. No man, he said, could be blamed for want of character or talents; he blamed not ministers for inability to defend, but for inclination to destroy. They had been charged with vindictiveness; but did they not, while trampling on the liberty of the press on one side, employ it for the purposes of vilification, misrepresentation, and scurrility on the other? He then called upon the country to witness, that he and the friends with whom he acted, were solemnly pledged to each other never to resign the project, which he had held up against corruption; and though he might never again rise in that house, though it might not be their fate to see the perfection of that constitution, which they hailed on its return to life, they would never relinquish their efforts in its support. He had the satisfaction to reflect, that in those countries where liberty was extinguished, it had never given way, but when the corruption of the prince had combined with the vices of the people for its subversion. But he thanked Heaven that country was blessed with a virtuous and patriotic prince, attached to the freedom and happiness of his people, and the spirit of the people was yet unbroken: even in the capital, where corruption sat like an *Incubus* upon the public heart, and sucked the vital blood of the constitution, the indignation of the people was manifest against the conduct of their rulers. He called upon the representatives of the people to join him in an address to his majesty; in a supplication to that king, whom

whom all revered, not as from an humble arm of the British empire, but as from a great and independent kingdom, to free them from those measures, which rendered that country a scandal to the name of British liberty. He concluded his speech by moving the following resolution :

“ *Resolved*, That an humble address be presented to the king, to inform his majesty, that having taken into consideration the growth of expence and influence in that country, it appeared on a comparative view of the public charges of 1789, with those of 1784, exclusive of the charges for bounties and parliamentary grants, and including the charges in collecting the revenue, that there had been in 1789, an increase of expence of 183,000*l.* That the civil list within that period, had increased 31,000*l.* of which the increase of the pension list was 16,000*l.* besides 14,000*l.* which had ceased, and was supplied within the same period ; so that in the course of five years, not less than 30,000*l.* a year in pensions had been granted on the civil establishment alone, besides an increase in military pensions, and in charges on other establishments in the nature of pensions.

That the expence of collecting the revenues has, since Lady-day, 1784, increased 105,000*l.*

That the increase of expence of collecting the hereditary, additional, and stamp duties, had increased 73,000*l.* without including additions made since March, 1789, by adding two members of parliament to the revenue board, and making nine commissioners of revenue instead of seven, the number to which the commissioners were in 1773, reduced by public agreement ; and also, without including new salaries, given in the persons of five members of parliament, to stamp officers, for discharging a duty which was formerly annexed to the board of accounts by public agreement, and executed without any distinct salary, and without complaint.

That this increase of 73,000*l.* could not be justified. That the new taxes, particularly those on malt and tobacco, were no excuse for such an increase, inasmuch as the tax on malt produced not more than 27,000*l.* net, and that the late excise on tobacco was not attended with any increase of revenue.

That that expence was the more censurable, because the collection of the revenue was already loaded with many unnecessary charges, particularly great salaries to officers of customs who did no duty, and with other sinecure offices, which were in fact pensions, given to individuals for political considerations, without any view to the collection of the revenue.

That

That the encrease of the revenue since 1784, after paying drawbacks and bounties, appeared to be a sum not less than 168,000*l.* but by the encrease of expence in collecting the same, was reduced to a net sum of about 67,000*l.* so that after deducting the charge of 32,000*l.* for the post-office, his majesty's government paid 73,000*l.* for getting net to the treasury 67,000*l.*

That they were sensible of the blessings of his majesty's reign, and the improving the state of the agriculture and commerce of the country, but must consider the same as the result of a free constitution, recovered under his majesty's auspices, and not of the ability or virtue of his present ministers; on the contrary, that their plans of expence, if not immediately checked, would deprive them of those blessings, inasmuch as the public expence exceeded the public income in a sum of not less than 70,000*l.* after allowing for a payment of 34,000*l.* made to government that year for New Geneva, which was a casual resource, and would not again recur; so that their annual expence then was in a course of exceeding their annual income in a sum of more than 100,000*l.* notwithstanding the new taxes.

That in the two last years, ending Lady-day, 1789, after striking off fictitious charges, they had encreased the debt of the nation 113,000*l.* notwithstanding a surplus of the loan duties in that period, to diminish the funded debt, and the continuation of those new taxes, which were granted in confidence of preventing the accumulation of any debt whatsoever.

That this house having before them the returns of those articles of revenue, in which the health and comforts of the people were particularly concerned, could not but observe, that the regulations affecting the breweries, appeared not only to have been fruitless, but in a great degree pernicious, inasmuch as the inland excise on beer and ale, for three years previous to July, 1789, produced not less than 390,000*l.* whereas the said excise for the three years, ending 1790, produced 266,000*l.* which was a falling off in the latter period of 124,000*l.* so that the breweries had been almost extinguished by the present regulation, and instead of giving the people a wholesome and necessary liquor, the regulations of his majesty's ministers had extracted a pernicious income from the sale of spirits, at the expence of the morals and health of the lower class of the people.

That this house having taken into consideration the growth of influence, begged leave to inform his majesty, that within the last year, the new salaries and additional places created for members of that house, together with new

or

or revived offices for the same, amounted to a number not less than fourteen, and there was also a considerable number of pensions granted to members of that house or to their connexions, within the same period, and that the joint increase was so considerable, as to comprehend a number which, when taken from one side and added to the other, was not less, than that majority, which had, in the course of that session, usually decided the great questions between the people and the minister.

That when they looked at the progress of influence within the last twenty years, they found, that the number of revived or new places and salaries created within that period, and then in the possession of members of that house, was not less than forty, a number, which exceeded all the counties in Ireland, and that they could not but observe, that the number of placemen and pensioners, then members of that house, were not less than 108. That to that they were to add a number of persons expecting both reversions and honors; and that they could not avoid informing his majesty, that they had but too strong reason to apprehend, that the ministers of the crown had grossly abused the prerogative, by virtue of which his majesty had been wont to confer honors on the subject, and they apprehended, that his ministers had entered into various agreements for the purpose of procuring improper and corrupt returns into that house by the sale of the honors of the other.

That they were most apprehensive for the safety of their liberties; inasmuch as the attempts of actual influence had been accompanied by positive declarations, and his majesty's faithful commons had been informed, that in order to defeat a resistance made in parliament to the will of the minister, certain great portions of public money had been expended, to which most alarming confession they could annex no meaning other than that the government of that country formerly had, in breach of trust, misapplied the public treasure under the names of place, pension, or salary, to induce individuals to betray the community for such corrupt considerations.

That even the particular sums so expended had been specified and confessed; and that such corrupt and desperate practice alarmed them the more, because it had not transpired as a crime to be punished, but had been openly avowed as an instrument of government to be again resorted to.

That such exercise of influence had not only been confessed, but defended on a principle most offensive to the feelings, and derogatory from the condition of his majesty's subjects of Ireland.

That

That when they fought the same securities and provisions for the liberties of the people, which Great Britain had adopted against the corrupt influence of the minister, they had been told, that such provisions, however proper in Great Britain, were not calculated for the meridian of Ireland; for that the government in that country should be stronger than the government in Great Britain, and of course the influence and authority of the people of Ireland comparatively weaker in the balance of the constitution.

That such wild and unconstitutional distinction, construing the people of Ireland out of the benefit of equal liberty, to introduce among them a superior degree of corruption and profligacy, called forth from his majesty's faithful commons of Ireland, the warmest protestations, and they did protest against it accordingly. And they further, did, in the name, and on behalf of the people of that realm, claim and challenge an equal inheritance in the blessings of the British constitution, and an equal right to secure those blessings by every wise and salutary law.

That they begged leave further to inform his majesty, that personal as well as political liberty was in danger; that the subject had been imprisoned against law, by being holden to arbitrary and excessive bail. The declaration of rights, calculated to secure him against such oppression, had been disregarded and violated; the liberty of the press attacked, and the hopes of the nation in her grand inquest of correcting such mischiefs, blasted by the interposition of his majesty's ministers protecting from injury those illegal and arbitrary proceedings, which they could not presume to justify.

That they had ventured to lay the above particulars before his majesty, most humbly imploring his majesty's royal interposition, to guard their country against those dangers, which then threatened the independence of parliament, and the liberties of the people."

This was the last attack made by the patriots during the session: despairing of being able to carry any question whatever against a majority, which had remained so steady in their ranks, they resolved to perpetuate to posterity the real grounds of their opposing the late system of government, by recording them in the form of an address on the journals of that house. The debate was kept up with heat and acrimony till 4 o'clock on the Sunday morning; when upon the question of adjournment, the house divided 141 against 90.*

* 10 Parl. Deb. p. 421.

The parliament was prorogued on the 5th of April, 1790, and the viceroy informed them in his speech from the throne, that as the important objects, which had engaged their attention during the session, had been accomplished, he had great pleasure in signifying his majesty's approbation of the zeal they had shewn for the public interest; and the dispatch, with which they had concluded the national business.

In vain had the patriotic side of the House of Commons exerted their talents, and played all the powers of their batteries upon the ministerial phalanx: although a majority had been long secured, additional force was found requisite either to gain fresh proselytes or strengthen the wavering. A numerous creation of peers took place; and the parliamentary interest of the castle was thereby unquestionably increased. The very nature of the different questions, which had been pressed upon the ministers during the session, necessarily engaged and roused the feelings of the people out of doors. The Whig club, which was most obnoxious to government, was regularly attended by the most popular characters: it increased in numbers, and attention to the ends of its institutions. A northern Whig club was formed at Belfast, and Lord de Clifford placed in the chair. This gave fresh umbrage to the castle: and the newspaper contests for and against the club exceeded all moderation. Most of the volunteer corps, which kept up any share of their original spirit, identified themselves in a manner with it, as their beloved General Lord Charlemont was a constant attendant. Besides the late creation of peerages, the recent collation of so many places and pensions upon members of parliament, and the rejection of every popular motion made in the commons, which were felt or treated as public grievances affecting equally every part of the nation, a particular ground of discontent attached itself to the metropolis. The police bill was execrated by all, except those, who received under it emolument, patronage or power. One of the grand objections against it, was, that it served as an instrument for encreasing the power of the castle in the corporation. It was therefore proposed by some of the popular party, that a test should be subscribed by the mayor and aldermen not to accept of any place under the police; which they were so far from agreeing to, that they entered into an engagement, that no man should be elected or eligible to the board of aldermen, who should have signed any declaration or test whatever. The repeated failure of Mr. Alderman James in his election to the mayoralty by the exertions of Mr. Napper Tandy, who was at that

time very popular in the city, brought the mayor and aldermen and the common council to an open and violent rupture.

The different extraordinary movements on the Continent, gave rise to strong rumours of war: and the temper of the people of Ireland eagerly seized that opportunity of reviving and encreasing the corps of volunteers. Several offers were made to government to raise regiments of Roman Catholics. The progress of the French revolution, which at this time was spoken of by many of the first statesmen, politicians and philosophers with sympathy and admiration, became a favorite topic with the Irish: they had so recently obtained their own civil freedom and independence, that they were forward in sympathizing with others in pursuit of a similar object. The Belfast papers were conspicuous for their panegyrics on the French struggle against despotism, and their ardent efforts to attain a free constitution. That revolution had not yet exhibited any of those symptoms, at which a fair advocate for liberty should falter. For some time the government of Ireland began to dread the pruriency of civil freedom throughout the kingdom, and particularly in the province of Ulster. They sought the corrective in coercion and severity. Many then judged, that a lenient system would be more efficient. In this year the Irish government gave a strong illustration of the pliancy of the human mind to time and circumstance. That sympathy, which had induced Lord Buckingham to countenance, cherish and reward the emigrant democracy from Geneva, had now turned into disgust and horror. The secretary* openly announced the intention of government to abandon their intention to carry the project of a colony at New Geneva into execution. Fortunately for the country this sudden change in the sentiments of the castle turned out a saving of 33,000*l.* so much out of the 50,000*l.* having remained unapplied: it was carried to the credit of the nation.

Notwithstanding the present prevalence of the popular political opinions out of parliament, the influence of the castle prevented any great change in the return of members to the new parliament. The dissolution took place on the 8th of April, 1790, and the new parliament was summoned to meet at Dublin on the 20th of May, but before that time was further prorogued to the 10th of July, when it met for dispatch of business.

During that short session, which lasted only to the 24th of the month, lit-

* 10 Parl. Deb. p. 137.

tle occurred worthy of notice. When Mr. Secretary Hobart moved, that Mr. Foster should again take the chair in that assembly, Mr. Conolly moved as an amendment, that the name of the Right Honorable William Brabazon Ponsonby should be inserted: but the house did not divide, and Mr. Foster was re-elected, accepted and complimented by the lord lieutenant; who then made the following speech to both houses.

“ MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

“ I HAVE it in command from the king, to acquaint you, that his majesty some time since received information, that two vessels belonging to his majesty’s subjects, and navigated under the British flag, and two others, the description of which is not hitherto sufficiently ascertained, had been captured at Nootka Sound, on the north-west coast of America, by an officer commanding two Spanish ships of war; that the cargoes of the British vessels had been seized, and that their officers and crews had been sent as prisoners to a Spanish port. His majesty in consequence of this transaction, and of the communications which had passed on the subject between his majesty and the court of Spain, directed his minister at Madrid to claim such full and adequate satisfaction, as the nature of the case evidently required. And his majesty having also received information, that considerable armaments were carrying on in the ports of Spain, judged it indispensably necessary to give orders for making such preparations as might put it in his majesty’s power to act with vigor and effect in support of the honor of his crown, and the interests of his people.

“ His majesty entertains the strongest desire for the maintenance of peace, on just and honorable grounds, and he has directed me to assure you, that no proper steps shall be omitted by him, which may conduce to this object: but if unfortunately his majesty’s endeavours should not be successful, he has the fullest reliance on the cordial and effectual support of his parliament of Ireland, in the prosecution of such measures as may eventually become necessary for the honor of his crown, and for the protection of the essential rights of all his subjects, and the common interests of the empire.

“ Convinced that the same regard for his majesty’s royal person, family and government, which have at all times distinguished his subjects of this kingdom, will be equally manifested upon this occasion, I entertain no doubt of my being authorized to convey to his majesty, the fullest testimony of your attachment, loyalty and zeal.”

When Sir Henry Cavendish, who had recently quitted the opposition, moved for the address to the lord lieutenant, he complimented the nation upon their tranquillity and happiness rather beyond what the existing circumstances then warranted. He thought it unnecessary to enter into any panegyric on the personal merit, or government of the viceroy: both were felt, and spoken of every where he went to: and the peace, happiness, and tranquillity of the country, were the best proofs that its government was well administered.

Mr. G. Ponsonby congratulated the right honorable baronet on the sudden discovery he had made in the merits of the present administration; and he lamented, that his own discernment did not allow him the happiness of altering his opinions of administration under the auspices of Lord Westmoreland's government.

If the address moved, meant merely to convey the usual empty compliments to his excellency for complying with his duty in communicating his majesty's sentiments to the house, he had no objection: but if it were intended to convey a tittle of approbation to those measures, which the right honorable baronet and himself had so uniformly and so recently opposed together, he should be against it. He declared he never would give his approbation nor his support to the present or any other administration, but upon the condition of their acceding to the specific measures, which he and his friends had formerly avowed on the close of the last parliament.

The purpose of convening the parliament was to obtain a vote of credit: accordingly the chancellor of the Exchequer moved, *for a vote of credit for 200,000*l.* to be applied by the lord lieutenant towards the expence of government. Mr. G. Ponsonby, Mr. O'Hara, and Mr. Grattan objected to the generality of the application: they contended, that the application of the grant should have been specified: they all concurred in admitting the interest of the two countries as inseparable; and Mr. Grattan reminded the house, that in the French war in 1778, there had passed a vote of credit for 300,000*l.* for putting the country in a state of defence, and that in January, 1779, there was not a shilling in the Treasury, and government was obliged to borrow 50,000*l.* from a private gentleman, to pay the army. After such a precedent he wished the motion to be specific; to which the chancellor of the Exchequer assented.

* 11 Parl. Deb. p. 9.

On the 24th of the month his majesty's answer to the address of the commons was communicated to the house, which was strongly expressive of his satisfaction at their determination to support the honor of his crown, and the common interest of the empire, at that important crisis: the parliament was then prorogued, and did not meet for the dispatch of business, till the 20th of January, 1791. In the Autumn, Mr. Secretary Hobart went over to England, as it was generally presumed, to concert the plan of the next parliamentary campaign with the British cabinet. It was also rumoured, that the Irish government having in the widest plenitude adopted the principles and system of Lord Buckingham's administration, the right honorable secretary had also much consultation with that nobleman. Lord Westmoreland in the mean time was not inattentive to the means of acquiring popularity, the want of which in his predecessor he felt very strongly operating upon his own government. In a country excursion for nearly nine months he visited most of the nobility through the kingdom: his excellency and his lady on all solemn occasions appeared clad in Irish manufactures: and though apparently trifling, the permission to represent the favorite Beggar's Opera, which had been prohibited during the severe government of Lord Buckingham, gained him no small share of public favor.

Lord Westmoreland's speech from the throne, on the meeting of parliament on the 20th of January, 1791, contained nothing extraordinary beyond a communication, that the differences with the court of Spain had been brought to a happy termination. On the next day, when the address which had been voted to the throne was read, Sir Richard Musgrave objected to that paragraph of it, which expressed the thanks of the house for continuing their present administration; he lamented, that addresses passed and were generally considered mere matter of form and unmeaning adulation. An assent to that address, would be a virtual sanction to the last, and an express approbation of the present administration; both of which he strongly deprecated. He concluded a virulent speech with a sarcastic observation, that the happy selection of able and wise senators on the other side of the house so well arrayed and disciplined, proved that there was wisdom and energy at the helm. Mr. Grattan had on the preceding day dissented from the corresponding paragraph in the address to his excellency.

The business of this session differed very little from that of the last before the dissolution. The patriots appeared rather to have lost, than acquired strength

strength by the new election. Their number did not at any time during the course of this session exceed fourscore. But their resolution to press all the questions, which they had brought forward in the last parliament appeared more violently determined than ever: inasmuch, that Mr. George Ponsonby in replying to Mr. Cook,* assured him, that the hope he had expressed of gentlemen on his side of the house not bringing forward those measures, which they had done for some sessions past, was a lost hope, for that nothing but the hand of death or success should ever induce them to give up their pursuits. A singular parliamentary phenomenon ought to be noticed about the commencement of this session. Mr. D. La Touche had moved, that it was the opinion of the house, that the excessive use of spirituous liquors was highly injurious to the health and morals of the people; which he intended to follow up with a motion, for a committee to take the subject into consideration. Mr. Secretary Hobart and Mr. Grattan both instantly rose to second the motion. But the former having first caught the eye of the speaker, the latter expressed his pleasure to see the right honorable gentleman shew any activity in any case, where the country was to be benefited: he should be always happy to give him the way; let the country receive the benefit, and his be the applause.

On the 3d of February Mr. George Ponsonby made his promised motion, which was seconded by Mr. Grattan to the following effect: that a select committee be appointed, consisting of members of that house not holding any employment, or enjoying any pension under the crown, to examine whether any, or what advantages have arisen to this kingdom from the appointment of two additional commissioners of the revenue; from the separation of the board of stamps and accounts; from the granting 500*l.* a year additional salary to the surveyor of the ordnance; 250*l.* a year additional salary to the principal storekeeper of the ordnance; 250*l.* a year to the clerk of the ordnance; 200*l.* a year additional salary to the clerk of the delivery of the ordnance; 600*l.* a year pension to General Hale, in lieu of his resigning his employment of lieutenant general of the ordnance, in order to facilitate the succession of the present possessor: 400*l.* a year additional salary to the clerk of the pipe; 400*l.* a year additional salary to the customs of Kinsale; and 150*l.* a year additional salary to the barrack master of Dublin; and that they do report their opinion thereon to the house.

* 11 Parl. Deb. p. 384.

This was met by a motion for adjournment; and after a long and warm contest, ended in the first division of the session; in which there were 72 against, and 132 for the adjournment. Immediately before the division, Mr. G. Ponsonby remarked, that it was evident, the administration did not mean to meet the questions of difference between them by reasoning and agreement, but by that very corruption and influence the minority were warring against, namely, *dead majorities*. On the 7th of February, Mr. Grattan moved a string of resolutions relative to the revenue, out of which he concluded, that upon a fair average since the year 1785, when the new taxes were granted, the increase of the revenue had given to government the annual increase of 153,000*l.* and that government had exceeded her own estimates, on the faith of which the new taxes had been granted, in the annual sum of 115,000*l.*; from whence he established these deductions; that the people had kept faith with government, and that government had broken faith with the people. The chancellor of the exchequer and Mr. Monk Mason, contended, that the statements were unfairly made by Mr. Grattan: and that whatever increases had been made in the annual expenditure, were occasioned by parliament, and not by government. The resolutions were negatived without a division.

* On the next day Mr. Grattan moved the following resolutions:—" That
 " a select committee be appointed to enquire in the most solemn manner,
 " whether the late or present administration have entered into any corrupt
 " agreement with any person or persons, to recommend such person or per-
 " sons to his majesty, for the purpose of being created peers of this kingdom,
 " in consideration of their paying certain sums of money, to be laid out in the
 " purchase of seats for members to serve in parliament, contrary to the rights
 " of the people, inconsistent with the independence of parliament, and in di-
 " rect violation of the fundamental laws of the land."

* In this debate, Mr. Denis Brown, a very staunch supporter of the administration, amongst other matters observed, (and no answer was attempted to be given to the observation) that when the gentlemen on the opposite side of the house were in confidence and acted with government under Lord Northington, a certain person was enobled, and returned two Castle secretaries into that house in part payment of his honor. How could those virtuous gentlemen know of such a transaction, and not follow it up with an impeachment? He defied contradiction: but wondered, that any men representing peers in that house, or set in purchased seats, should be so forward to agitate that question. 11 Parl. Debates, p. 162.

It

It was seconded by Mr. Curran: much strength of oratory was employed in support of the motion; but it shared the usual fate of rejection by a majority of 135 to 85. And in order to give all possible eclat to this charge of selling the peerage, and prostituting the price thereof to the purchase of seats in the House of Commons, Mr. Curran moved the following resolution, in which he was seconded by Mr. Grattan, viz. "That a committee be appointed, consisting of members of both houses of parliament, who do not hold any employment, or enjoy any pension under the crown, to enquire in the most solemn manner, whether the late or present administration have directly or indirectly, entered into any corrupt agreement with any person or persons, to recommend such person or persons to his majesty, for the purpose of being created peers of this kingdom, in consideration of their paying certain sums of money, to be laid out in the purchase of seats for members to serve in parliament, contrary to the rights of the people, inconsistent with the independence of parliament, and in direct violation of the fundamental laws of the land."

The ministerial members on all these occasions loudly complained of the reiteration of the old charges even without new arguments to support them; they strongly insisted that no particular facts were alleged, much less proved; and that general fame, surmise and assertion, were no grounds for parliamentary impeachments, or any other solemn proceedings in that house. Mr. Grattan, before answering the objections advanced against the motion, adverted to the general dull and empty declamation uttered by the advocates of a corrupt government against the defenders of an injured people.

Four times had those advocates told them, they had brought this grievance forth, as if grievances were only to be matter of public debate when they were matters of novelty; or as if grievances were trading questions for a party or a person to press, to sell and to abandon; or as if they came thither to act farces to please the appetite of the public, and did not sit there to persevere in the redress of grievances, pledged as they were, and covenanted to the people on these important subjects. They had been told their political budget of grievances was small. But the creation of divers peers for money to be laid out in the purchase of divers seats for ministerial dependants, and the appointment of fifteen new parliamentary places or salaries admitted to be for the purpose of buying a majority, even if they were the only crimes of the government, composed no scanty political budget of corruption and iniquity.

Generally

Generally in these debates, the same arguments on both sides were repeated with increased acrimony, and determined by the same divisions.

Scarcely was any question more vehemently debated during the session, than Mr. Grattan's motion for an Irish East-India trade, which was, that the committee of trade should enquire, whether any legislative provisions were then existing, the continuance of which might prevent that country from receiving the full benefit of her free trade beyond the Cape of Good Hope and the Streights of Magellan. The motion was seconded by Mr. W. Brabazon Ponsonby. This was a favorite object of speculation at this time with the most opulent of the Irish merchants: but government, it seems, wished not to be drawn into a dispute or contest with the English East-India Company. The whole question was, whether, after having obtained a free trade, Ireland were to be restrained from the exercise of it in the Eastern hemisphere, out of tenderness, deference, or fear of the East-India Company: for whom, Mr. Grattan observed, the Irish cabinet was then an agent. At three o'clock the question was put, and lost by a majority of 147 against 86.*

The

* In this debate, Mr. Cook had complained of some illiberal reflections made upon him as an Englishman, which brought up Mr. Conolly. He was sorry, he said, such illiberality could be supposed to prevail in that house, having experienced the greatest attention and civility in the English House of Commons, where he had sat above 22 years, whenever he troubled it upon Irish affairs, although he spoke in a very awkward and unintelligible manner. He said, that there was no danger from the eloquence of an Irishman, a Burke, a Barry, or a Sheridan, that in the English House of Commons any thing could be accomplished that could militate against the constitution or trade of England: nor could he suppose the eloquence of any Englishman there could injure that kingdom: it was of the Irish, and not of the Englishmen that he was afraid in that house. In the latter end of last parliament, a place bill, a pension bill, a responsibility bill, had been refused to that kingdom, by a majority of Irishmen, although the kingdom of Great Britain had shewn by experience the necessity and use of such laws; and he had in that house declared himself ashamed of having his name enrolled in such a society. That if he could guess, by the complexion of the house that night, it would soon be guilty of a self-denying ordinance in respect to its foreign trade, although the sister country did not pretend to deny the right of that kingdom to trade uncontrolled to those parts, where no British settlements were established. If that were the case, as there was no other mode established, by which a member could quit that house, he must wish to be called to its bar, and expelled. The British House of Commons consisted of 558 members, 67 only of which were placemen, and no pensioners could sit, nor placeman, unless originally chosen as such, or upon getting a place, on being re-chosen. In their house, consisting of 300 members, 110 were placemen or pensioners. They had adopted the whole power of the privy council before the repeal of Poyning's law, and literally appeared to be determined not to let any law pass that was not agree-

The police bill had been petitioned against by several public bodies; and on the 4th of March Mr. Grattan again introduced it to the consideration of the house. After having proved by the experience of a number of years, that no institution was more obnoxious to the citizens; that no institution could be more extravagant; and that no institution could be less productive of advantages to the public; it remained for the wisdom of the house to correct the system, which had neither answered the ends of public peace, of private protection, or of any necessary economy. He would therefore propose a resolution, carrying on it no edge that could injure, no severity that could offend any man; but which, without imposing any humiliation, might be adopted, even by those, who had originally voted for the police, or who had since supported it. He then moved,

“ That the establishment of the police in the city of Dublin, had been an
 “ experiment attended with considerable expence, without producing ade-
 “ quate advantages; and that it was then necessary to establish a guard un-
 “ der the direction of the different parishes, and subject to the superintendence
 “ of the lord mayor.”

If that motion were not resisted, he should follow it up with another, for leave to bring in a bill to give it effect. Mr. Mason said, he for one would certainly oppose it, as he thought it utterly unfounded. Immediately Mr. Grattan entered upon a most vehement invective against the measure.* The motion met with its former fate, having been rejected by 135 against 87.

The 15th of March was the day appointed for the second reading of the bill
 “ to disable any person who shall have in his own name, or in the name of
 “ any person or persons in trust for him, or for his benefit, any office or place
 “ of profit whatsoever under the crown, created after a certain time, [the

able to the English minister or to the English merchant; and that therefore he was seriously in earnest in his wish to be expelled from a society that he conceived to be acting in direct contradiction to the constitution and trade of Ireland.

* 11 Parl. Debates, p. 263. Ministers had, he said, resorted to a place army and a pensional magistracy: the one was to give boldness to corruption in parliament, and the other to give the minister's influence patronage in the city. Their means were, this police establishment: the plan they did not entirely frame: they found it. A bill had shewn its face in the British House of Commons for a moment, and had been turned out of the doors immediately: a scavenger would have found it in the streets of London: the groping hands of the Irish ministry picked it up, and made it the law of the land.

“ year

“ year 1788] from being chosen a member of, or from sitting or voting in the present, or any future House of Commons.”

And when Mr. Forbes rose to second it, Mr. Mason said, that having opposed this bill every session for thirty years, he would not weary the house with fresh arguments against it: his decided opinion was, that the influence of the crown was barely sufficient to preserve the constitution, and to prevent it from degenerating into the worst of all possible governments, a democracy. Another gentleman on the same side of the house, thought government must have a majority to support them in their necessary measures, and to extinguish the squibs that were thrown against them; and the cheaper that majority was procured, so much the better for the country: and being arraigned by Mr. G. Ponsonby for using such unconstitutional language, he repeated it, and added, if they had not, they must cease to govern. The bill was lost by a similar majority. The division of the Irish House of Commons was not precisely formed upon the principles which divided the parliament of Great Britain: for on this night, Mr. C. O’Neile, who was one of the most forward in the opposition in Ireland, paid many handsome compliments to Mr. Pitt, whom he believed to be as honest a minister as ever governed England: but he must say, that he prescribed a very different mode of conduct to his deputies in that kingdom. Equally violent and equally unsuccessful were the four remaining attacks made by the gentlemen of the opposition: viz. Mr. Grattan’s motion for the encouragement of the reclaiming of barren land: on the first reading of the pension bill: the second reading of the responsibility bill; and Mr. G. Ponsonby’s motion respecting *fiats* for levying unassessed damages upon the parties *affidavits* of their own imaginary losses.*

The

* 11 Parl. Debates, p. 359. This motion was, “ That it is the opinion of this committee, that the Chief Justice of the Court of King’s Bench, in ordering a *capias ad respondendum* to issue against John Magee, on the affidavit of Richard Daly, marked 4000*l.* acted illegally.”

Mr. G. Ponsonby entered into an able disquisition of the law of actions on tort, liquidated, and uncertain damages, which rest with a jury, and special and excessive bail. The debate was very long, and not very interesting to others than lawyers. The question was of the highest consequence to the liberty of the press and of the subject. It had been worked up more into a party question, than probably it otherwise would have been, on account of the two persons principally concerned, viz. Francis Higgins, the proprietor and conductor of a government newspaper, and John Magee, the printer and editor of an opposition newspaper. The motion was vehemently opposed by the attorney and solicitor general, and prime serjeant: and ultimately rejected by a majority of 125 against

The year 1791 brought the political fever, then raging on the continent to a crisis alarming to the British empire, and particularly to Ireland. No wonder, that a country, which had so lately obtained a constitution for itself, should find extensive subject for reflection upon the revolutions and new constitutions of France and Poland. The sympathy, which several of the armed corps and other public bodies exultingly expressed with the assertors of civil freedom in those countries, was obnoxious to government, and it became the system of the castle to affix a marked stigma upon every person, who countenanced or spoke in favor of any measure, that bore the semblance of reform or revolution. Even the ardor for commemorating the æra of 1688, was attempted to be damped: the word *liberty* always carried with it suspicion, often reprobation. As all the efforts and struggles of the opposition in the late sessions of parliament, were for the attainment of those rights,

65. The leading facts upon which the motion was bottomed, were according to Mr. G. Ponsonby's statement: that in that case, Magee, the printer, had most grossly abused the noble lord himself in his paper; it was therefore incumbent on his lordship to proceed with the most guarded circumspection, that no enemy might attribute his severity to personal motives: his conduct should have been such as the law, in its strictest sense, would warrant and justify. But what was his lordship's conduct? Instead of proceeding with that caution, and that disregard to vulgar abuse, which would have done him honor, he granted against Magee one fiat at the suit of Daly for 4000*l.* one fiat at the suit of Higgins for 2000*l.* one fiat at the suit of Tracy for 1000*l.* and one fiat at the suit of Brennan for 800*l.* making together a sum of 7800*l.* and this at a time when the man was under a criminal information in his own court.

Magee after many delays and long imprisonment, was brought to trial upon Daly's fiat of 4000*l.* In this trial a variety of newspapers and letters, not alleged in the original affidavit, were allowed to be read as evidence against him; yet after all, twelve honest men, upon their oaths, awarded Daly but 200*l.* damages, the twentieth part of the fiat for which he was thrown into jail. If any proof of the enormity of the proceedings was wanting, here it was: Magee had offered 500*l.* bail, which was refused, not by Lord Clonmel alone, but by the whole court: he did not, however, want to criminate the other judges, nor would this criminality justify the chief justice: no partnership in wrong can produce innocence: he would therefore take no notice of them, but confine himself to the chief justice alone, and his charge against him was, that he had illegally deprived a freeman of his liberty.

This was no question of party. He did not take it up as a measure of opposition; every man knew, that before he was fixed on that side of the house, he declared he would follow it up: therefore let it not be considered as a question of party; the true motives, on which he urged it were stronger than any party motives could be; a regard for the laws and liberties of the country, a regard for the most invaluable blessings the subject could possess; personal liberty; a blessing, without which all earthly blessings were vain and useless.

which

which principally form the freedom of the British constitution, the assertors of them were branded with the now odious term of democrats, and holden out by government as factious disturbers of the old constitution, with a view to introduce the new fangled principles of revolutionary doctrines. In proportion to the progress of the French revolution to those scenes, which at last outraged humanity, were some efforts in favor of the most constitutional liberty resisted in parliament, as attempts to introduce a system of French equality. Such was the general panic, such the real or assumed execration of every thing, that had a tendency to democracy, that comparatively few of the higher orders through the kingdom retained, or avowed those general whig principles, which two years before that man was not deemed loyal, who did not profess.

Mr. Burke by his book on the French revolution, published in the year 1790*, had worked a stupendous change in the public mind, and the few in the upper walks of life, who did not become his profelytes, merely retaining

* The political change of the public mind about this period, was evidently productive of the most unprecedented system of strong and coercive measures, known since the Revolution within the British empire. A very decided majority both within and without the parliament of Great Britain favored that system: in Ireland the people more generally resisted its introduction and influence than in Great Britain. Mr. Burke had the merit, if merit it were, of causing the great defection from the Whig Party: he and his friends, who went over to government on that occasion, were the most forward and zealous in holding out the dwindled phalanx of opposition, as enemies to their country and constitution. The fervor of the new converts for proselytizing their old associates was unbounded; the old leaders of the court party triumphantly indulged in the easy decomposition of their opponents: both concurred in stamping the few, who steadily retained their principles with all the odium, contempt and malevolence, that ingenuity could affix to the new terms, Jacobins and Democrats. From thenceforth a new and fable tinge was thrown upon every attempt in parliament to urge any popular measure, that would lately have been considered patriotic and constitutional. It is not a little remarkable, that the first time Mr. Burke publicly avowed his new creed, and seceded from the opposition, was on the occasion of Mr. Flood's motion in the British House of Commons for enquiring into the state of the popular representation in parliament. Much as Mr. Burke had formerly inveighed against the want of confidence and sympathy between the constituents and representatives in Great Britain, yet evidently at this time they were perfectly identified, when compared with the relations of the people and the parliament in Ireland. That publication of Mr. Burke's gave occasion to Mr. Payne's *Rights of Man*. A book fatally calculated to seduce and poison the minds of an irritable and impoverished people, emerging from what they considered a state of oppression and slavery, into the possession of a free constitution, to the right of which their title had been acknowledged, but of the enjoyment of which, they had as yet been inflexible.

their

their former principles, were astonished to find their ranks thinned and their standard deserted by some of their most zealous leaders and supporters, who of course carried off with them the numerical strength of the party.

The change of political sentiment in Ireland did not keep pace with that in Great Britain. The defection from the ranks of opposition in parliament was comparatively trivial: and the general disposition of the people to civil liberty appeared to be sharpened by the encrease of coercion and intimidation. Some ill-minded and artful demagogues availed themselves of the popular fever, which had never totally abated from the year 1782: the pernicious doctrines and conclusions of Mr. Payne, artfully mixed up with the most popular truisms were circulated at the lowest price, distributed *gratis*, and imbibed with insatiable avidity: the castle-gates were trebly barred against concession and indulgence: it was published, that every effort towards their attainment at a time so critically awful, would be deemed hostile, and a future bar, even to seasonable application.

It may appear singular, that several years had now gone over, since Ireland had become independent in her legislature, and free in her trade; that the great body of the Irish people, who were still oppressed with a grievous code of penal statutes, should have attempted no public measure to be admitted to the enjoyment of that constitution, which their countrymen so triumphantly boasted of having asserted and obtained. The voice of the nation had been loud and unanimous for universal toleration, and indiscriminate participation of civil rights by every Irishman. Publications were circulated upon the tendency of the Catholic religion, to render its followers loyal, dutiful, and peaceable subjects; pastoral instructions were published by the Roman Catholic bishops through their dioceses, and read in all their chapels to dehort their congregations from imbibing the pernicious doctrines so sedulously attempted to be spread amongst them, and to enforce subordination, peace, and loyalty in their conduct.*

The Catholic body had not altogether remained inactive or inattentive to

* In this year, 1791, the author in his *Case Stated*, (p. 19.) professed an opinion, which his observation and experience have since confirmed, that circumstanced as the Irish are, their strict observance of the Catholic religion is supereminently calculated to preserve them from anarchy and confusion, and keep them docile, quiet and loyal. “ *It is in this, and this above every thing else, in which under Providence we shall find an antidote against the poison thus traiterously attempted to be spread amongst them.*”

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their concerns: the most liberal and friendly declarations in their favor had been made by the different bodies of volunteers; and out of respect to those gentlemen, who had so disinterestedly espoused their cause,* they held back
an

* Although several of these opinions, have appeared in the foregoing pages; yet there was one declaration made by a Protestant bishop, to which the Catholics had annexed particular influence, which ought not to have been omitted.

Bill of Rights' Battalion.

At a meeting of part of said battalion, at Ballymoney, on the 24th of December, 1783, the following resolutions having been unanimously agreed to, received the approbation of the remainder of the battalion, at Ballycastle, on the 26th of December.

Resolved, That the present crisis of the nation, united to the voice of our duty as freemen, dictate to us, and we are determined to pursue, such a line of conduct, as, founded in truth, animated by firmness, and guided by moderation, is the most likely expedient to stem the torrent of corruption at home, and resist usurpation from abroad.

Resolved, That as public men and public measures ought always to be open to animadversion and candid discussion, so the approbation of either has reciprocally a happy tendency to awe the profligate, and embolden the virtuous.

Resolved therefore, That the following address be presented from this battalion, by a deputation thereof, under arms, to the Earl of Bristol, Lord Bishop of Derry, for his truly laudable exertions in favor of the rights of mankind, and a parliamentary reform.

“ To the Right Honorable Earl of Bristol, Lord Bishop of Derry, for his truly laudable Exertions
“ in Favor of the Rights of Mankind, and a Parliamentary Reform.

“ To the Right Honorable the Earl of Bristol, Lord Bishop of Derry.

“ The Address of the Bill of Rights' Battalion.

“ MY LORD,

“ HAVING with the eye of silent approbation viewed your conduct in every
“ stage of its progress, at the grand national convention of volunteer delegates, we are impelled
“ by those generous sentiments, that actuate the breasts of Irishmen, to offer your lordship this address, as a mark of our esteem and gratitude.

“ Ingratitude, my lord, is not of Irish origin, though, some of Hibernia's detested sons, Mammon's bond slaves, now basely spurn the parent, by whose fostering hand they rose.

“ We see with indignation and concern, the treatment which the wise, spirited, and salutary
“ resolutions of the volunteer convention have received. But we trust, the virtuous efforts of an
“ united people, under the auspices of your lordship and your respectable colleagues, will yet cleanse
“ the Augean stable, the stalls of venality and corruption, the effluvia of noisome and putrid
“ boroughs.

“ The gloomy clouds of superstition and bigotry, those engines of disunion, being fled the realm,
“ the interests of Ireland can no longer suffer by a diversity of religious persuasions. All are united in the pursuit of one great object, the extermination of corruption from our constitution; nor
“ can

an application to parliament on their own behalf, lest it might interfere with those great, national, and popular questions, which the patriots in parliament had

“ can your lordship and your virtuous coadjutors, in promoting civil and religious liberty, be def-
“ titute of the stable aid of all professions.

“ Permit us to assure you, that as freemen, freeholders and volunteers, our exertions to effectu-
“ ate the grand work of reform already begun, shall be as strenuous as the aim is important. And
“ that we are, with unfeigned gratitude and respect, your lordship's most faithful friends,

“ Signed by order of the Battalion,

“ JOHN ORR, Sec.”

In consequence of the above resolutions, a deputation from the battalion, consisting of eighty rank and file, headed by their lieutenant colonel, waited on his lordship the 14th instant, at Downhill, and presented their address under arms; to which his lordship was pleased to give the subsequent reply :

“ GENTLEMEN,

“ WHEN you acknowledged the services of your fellow-citizens in the county
“ of Antrim, in the late struggle for liberty, you rewarded their toils in the coin most valuable
“ to virtuous men : and your approbation of their efforts, in some measure, consoled them for
“ want of success.

“ But when you step forth from your own county to hail the individual of another, unknown to
“ you but by his honest endeavours, and unconnected, except by that kindred spirit, which seems
“ now at length to pervade the whole mass of citizens, and like a Promethean fire, to animate an
“ hitherto lifeless lump, the satisfaction excited in his mind, by the applauses of men, who have a
“ right to approve what they dare to support, can be known only to those, who are conscious of
“ deserving what they are fortunate enough to receive.

“ Where the conscience of a patriot bears testimony to the truth of the panegyric, and the sin-
“ cerity of the panegyrist's praises ceases to be adulation, they then become the wholesome food of
“ a manly mind, and nourish that virtue they were at first intended only to approve.

“ But gentlemen, those who dare assert their own rights, should rise above the mean policy of
“ violating those of others.

“ There is in this island a class of citizens equally respectable, and infinitely more numerous,
“ than those who have hitherto oppressed them.

“ Men, who have long crouched under the iron rod of their oppressors, not from any daftardly
“ insensibility to their shackles, not from any unmanly indifference to the unalienable rights of
“ men ; but from a pious dread of wounding our common country through the sides of its
“ tyrants.

“ Men, in whose hearts beats at this instant as high a pulse for liberty, and through whose
“ veins pours a tide of as pure blood, and as noble too, as any that animates the proudest citizen
“ in Ireland.

“ Men, whose ancestors at the hazard of their property, and with the loss of their lives, ob-
“ tained the first great Bill of Rights, and upon which every other must be founded, the Magna
“ Charta of Ireland.

“ Men,

had pledged themselves to their country to persevere in till obtained. Several sessions had gone over in fruitless efforts to attain those points. The patriots, who, almost to a man, were favorable to the claims of the Catholics, declined bringing them before parliament; because the very circumstance of their being moved from the opposition bench, would be a sure ground of rejection. The Catholics could not but observe, the indisposition of government to concession daily encrease: and the day of remonstrance and redress vanish behind the cloud of rigor and coercion, now assumed necessary to be exercised upon the people.

On the 11th of February, 1791, a meeting was convened at Dublin of the general committee of the Catholics of Ireland, at which the different resolutions and instructions from various parts of the kingdom to the committee were read; upon which they came to the following resolution. "That the
" several papers then read, containing resolutions and instructions from that

" Men, whose ancestors in the midst of ignorance, could discriminate between the duties of a
" religionist, and the rights of a citizen; and who enacted those elementary and never obsolete
" statutes of premunire, which for centuries have been an irrefragable monument of their sagacity
" in distinguishing, and their fortitude, in severing their duty to the church of Rome, from their
" dependence on its court.

" Men, the undegenerate progeny of such virtuous ancestors, who with a firmness worthy of
" our imitation, and still more worthy of our gratitude, have endured those very outrages from their
" country, which their forefathers spurned at from its sovereign; and who, under a series of ac-
" cumulated wrongs which would heighten the disgrace of human policy, if they could be parallel-
" ed in its annals, have, with a fortitude as unexampled as their oppression, allowed every thing
" dear to the human heart to be wrecked, except their religion and their patriotism, except their
" acquiescence to the will of an inscrutable God, and their affection to a mistaken and deluded
" country.

" But gentlemen, the hour is now come, when sound policy, as well as irresistible justice, will
" compel those who demand their own rights, to support their claim by a restitution of those of
" their fellow citizens.

" When Ireland must necessarily avail herself of her whole internal force to ward off foreign
" encroachment, or once more acquiesce under those encroachments, the better to exercise anew
" the tyranny of a part of the community over the dearest and unalienable rights of others.

" For, one million of divided Protestants can never, in the scale of human government, be a
" counterpoise against two millions of united Catholics. But gentlemen of the Bill of Rights' bat-
" talion, I appeal to yourselves, and summon you to consistency. Tyranny is not government,
" and allegiance is due only to protection.

" BRISTOL."

“ city, and from the principal cities and towns in Ireland, be referred to a
 “ committee of eight, who should report thereon to the committee, on Fri-
 “ day the 18th instant :” on which day, the general committee met, the
 Earl of Fingal being in the chair, Resolved, “ that the report of the com-
 “ mittee of eight, on the resolutions and instructions transmitted to them
 “ from the different parts of the kingdom be received ;” and the report was
 to the following effect :

“ Your committee having, in obedience to your directions, carefully pe-
 “ rused the resolutions of the Catholics of Ireland, report, that said resolu-
 “ tions contain the most unequivocal sentiments of loyalty to our most gra-
 “ cious sovereign, George the Third, of love for our country, and obedience
 “ to its laws, and the most humble hope of being restored to some participa-
 “ tion of its excellent constitution.

“ That your Catholic brethren refer, with confidence, to the numberless
 “ proofs they have given of fidelity in times the most perilous, when rebel-
 “ lion raged in the bosom of Britain, and when foreign invasion threatened
 “ our coast, and to that alacrity with which all descriptions of our people
 “ took the oath of allegiance ; and they rely that their scrupulous observance
 “ of such sacred obligation will no where be doubted, when it is considered,
 “ that if they took those oaths required by law, they would thereby become
 “ entitled to all the rights of citizens.

“ That, with all humility, they confide in the justice, liberality, and wis-
 “ dom of parliament, and the benignity of our most gracious sovereign, to
 “ relieve them from their degraded situation, and no longer to suffer them to
 “ continue like strangers in their native land ; but thus have the glory of
 “ shewing all Europe, that in the plenitude of power, strength, and riches
 “ of the British empire, when nothing they grant can be imputed to any
 “ motives but those of justice and toleration ; that, at such a period, they
 “ deign to hear and relieve their oppressed and faithful subjects, and to unite
 “ them for ever to their country, by every tie of gratitude and interest ; and
 “ that they will shew to all Europe, that humble and peaceful conduct, and
 “ dutiful application, are the only true and effectual methods for good sub-
 “ jects to obtain relief from a wise and good government.

“ That our Catholic brethren therefore desire, that application may be
 “ made for such relief as the wisdom and justice of parliament may grant ;
 “ and they hope to be restored, at least, to some of the rights and privileges
 “ which

“ which have been wisely granted to others who dissent from the established
 “ church; that they may be thus enabled to promote, in conjunction with
 “ the rest of their fellow subjects, the present and future happiness and strength
 “ of their country.

“ That our said Catholic brethren direct, that such application be immedi-
 “ ately made, and continued, in the most submissive and constitutional man-
 “ ner, for a mitigation of the restrictions and disqualifications under which
 “ they labour.

“ Resolved, that this meeting do agree with, and adopt, the report of
 “ their committee, and that a committee of twelve be appointed to carry the
 “ same into execution.”

In obedience to the above resolution, a petition was prepared, though not presented, to parliament for the reasons mentioned in that report. It was impossible, that the disposition to civil liberty, which from the first institution of the volunteers had pervaded all ranks of persons throughout the kingdom, should have remained inactive upon the great mass of the community, who were Catholics. So little prominent notwithstanding were they as a body, in bringing forward their own claims, that it had been frequently questioned at public meetings in the North, whether or no they were sincere in the cause of liberty. Fatally however for their cause, the *anti-gallomania* which in Great Britain had produced such convulsive effects upon political, social, and even domestic ties and connections, was there productive of new ground of discord in the Catholic body. About three-score of the principal country gentlemen in conjunction with the Earl of Fingal, Lord Kenmare, and some of the dignified and other clergy, had in this year seceded from the Catholic committee, from an apprehension, that most of the city orators, who had taken a lead in it, were connected with some of the high flying patriots of the North, and not wholly unfriendly to the principles of the French revolution. Hence the Catholic body was divided into an aristocratic and a democratic party. Such at least were the two divisions of the Catholic body considered and represented to the public; and unfortunately for the cause of the body at large, the grounds of the division were urged by the respective partizans with considerable virulence and acrimony. Several leading gentlemen of the Catholic committee, had formed political intimacies with some gentlemen at the bar of great abilities, and staunch advocates for all the popular questions that had lately been brought before parliament; among whom

the Honorable Simon Butler, a brother of the late Lord Mountgarret, Theobald Wolfe Tone, and Todd Jones were the most forward. These gentlemen appearing earnest in their pursuit of freedom for themselves and others, assured the gentlemen of the committee of the liberal and cordial disposition of their northern friends and associates, to co-operate with them in the glorious object of obtaining the emancipation of three millions of their countrymen, and they easily persuaded them, that an union of their interests for this great object must ultimately succeed. These gentlemen proffered their services to the Catholic committee, and published in their own names, some very able and strong arguments for the repeal of all their restrictive laws against the Roman Catholics. These publications contained language more bold and decisive than had hitherto ever been adopted in urging the claims of that body; some also of their own body followed the example of these Protestant gentlemen, and publicly spoke a language, which had before never come from the mouth or pen of any one of the Catholic persuasion in Ireland. It would be needless to remark how obnoxious such gentlemen and their writings were to government; and it is necessary to presume, that the castle must have intimated to those gentlemen of the Catholic body, upon whom they had a more immediate influence, how offensive to government this connexion and union between the Catholics and Dissenters were, and hence arose that secession from the committee, which we shall afterwards notice.

The Irish nation had been for some time in the habit of reading and canvassing all political topics, and there is no question, but that the public mind was much opened, and the people out of parliament generally disposed to support the Catholic claims.

Upon these grounds the committee had come to a resolution of availing themselves of the earliest opportunity of applying to parliament* for redress.

They

* Although the petition, which was prepared for this purpose, never were actually presented to parliament, a copy of it is subjoined, in order to shew the nature and extent of the Catholics' expectations at that period.

“ To the Right Honorable and Honorable the Knights, Citizens, and Burgeesses, in Parliament

“ assembled,

“ The humble Petition of the Catholics of Ireland.

“ SHEWETH,

“ THAT a century has now nearly elapsed since several laws, highly penal in their effect, were passed by the legislature of this country, excluding the Catholic inhabitants thereof from numberless privileges and advantages enjoyed by the rest of their fellow subjects.

“ That

They appointed twelve gentlemen to take without delay such steps, as they should deem expedient for that purpose. These gentlemen accepted the trust; but after having repeatedly met, two of them differed in opinion, with regard to the propriety of coming forward at that particular period, and declined complying with the direction which they had received.

From a desire of procuring unanimity, it was thought prudent to submit the subject again to the consideration of the general committee. At a meeting convened for that purpose, a gentleman who declared himself commissioned

“ That whilst the consequences of those laws were felt in their severest operation, the loyalty of the Catholics of Ireland was unshaken, and their conduct uniformly marked with that respect and submission due to legislative authority.

“ That your petitioners beg leave humbly to suggest to this honorable house, the laws of which they complain were passed in a season of animosity, at the close of party contention, and as the penalty of political opinions, which it is universally admitted do not at this day exist; that they were continued, as having been deemed necessary to secure the succession in the august House of Brunswick, to which none of their fellow subjects are more warmly attached.

“ That every danger to that succession is now removed, and that even if it were otherwise, they have lately bound themselves to their beloved sovereign, and their country, by the most awful and sacred obligation; an obligation to which your petitioners refer with the greater confidence, as, if oaths were lightly estimated by Catholics, they might long since have entitled themselves to the full rights of citizens.

“ That some years since, the parliament of this kingdom was, in its wisdom and humanity, pleased to remove part of the restrictions, under which your petitioners lay; and that this indulgence, far from producing any ill effects, has only served to strengthen the loyalty of your petitioners, and contribute to the growing prosperity of the empire.

“ That by the laws still in force, the Catholics of Ireland, though entitled through the benevolence of parliament to purchase lands, are precluded from almost every opportunity of improving the natural advantages of talents and connexions; and that when inclination, or any other circumstances, has disqualified them from commercial pursuits, they are under the cruel necessity of becoming exiles from their families and country, and seeking that situation in foreign states which is denied them in their native land.

“ That your petitioners feel a conscious pride in being able to offer their past, as a pledge of their future good conduct, and humbly beg leave to insist, that men sincerely and warmly attached to the constitution of their country, even when they were the objects of its censure and severity, are not likely to become less anxious for its preservation from being admitted to a fuller participation of its blessings.

“ Your petitioners, therefore, humbly pray, that this honorable house will take the premises into consideration, and grant to your petitioners such relief as to its wisdom, justice, and humanity shall seem meet.

“ And your petitioners will ever pray.”

by

by Lord Kenmare to communicate his sentiments to the committee, gave notice of his lordship's disapprobation of the measure, and of his determination not to co-operate in it, although his lordship had never attended at any of the meetings, in which the measure had been discussed, and the Earl of Fingal, who, on that night filled the chair, appeared to acquiesce in Lord Kenmare's opinion. The reason, however, for laying before parliament the situation of the Catholics, and humbly soliciting a relief from some of the severe restrictions, under which they laboured, appeared conclusive to the meeting; and the former resolution of an immediate application to the legislature was again adopted by a very great majority.

On the 18th of April the committee met once more and delivered in their report, which fully accounted for their reasons for suspending their application to parliament, and was to the following effect.

“ In compliance with your instructions, the first object of the attention of
 “ your committee was, to prepare a petition to parliament, expressive of
 “ those sentiments of loyalty and submission to the laws of their country, so
 “ strongly marked in the resolutions transmitted from different parts of the
 “ kingdom. We were aware of the unfavorable conclusions, which those of
 “ our fellow subjects, whose minds, from political or religious prejudices,
 “ were less prepared to meet our wishes, must naturally draw from the dis-
 “ union of any of our members, however small their numbers might be, or
 “ inconsiderable their consequence, when compared with that of the Catho-
 “ lic body at large. Anxious to obviate this inconvenience, we endeavoured,
 “ by every measure not inconsistent with the line of conduct pointed out to
 “ us by this general committee, to procure the co-operation of the two no-
 “ ble lords.

“ For this purpose your committee employed the mediation of our respect-
 “ able prelate, whose virtues and amiable character entitled him to the con-
 “ fidence of all parties; and with gratitude they acknowledge the kindness
 “ of his prompt and zealous, though ineffectual interference.

“ After consuming a considerable time in fruitless negotiations, your com-
 “ mittee directed Mr. Edward Byrne to acquaint Mr. Secretary Hobart of
 “ the intention of the Catholics, and to request to know when it would be
 “ agreeable to him to be waited upon by a deputation from that body, for
 “ the purpose of laying before him a copy of the petition, and soliciting the
 “ support of government on their behalf.

“ Upon

“ Upon receiving Mr. Secretary Hobart's answer, your committee, still
“ desirous to conciliate, informed the Earl of Fingal, and Lord Viscount
“ Kenmare, in writing, that from the respect which they bore to their lord-
“ ships, they had deputed Mr. Byrne and Mr. Rice to request their attendance
“ at the castle. This letter was forwarded by Mr. Byrne, and accompanied
“ with a note, acquainting their lordships, that these gentlemen would wait
“ on them at their respective houses on the following morning.

“ We are sorry to be obliged to observe, that these uncommon marks of
“ deference and respectful attention, far from gaining on the mind of the
“ noble viscount, seemed to render him more averse to conciliating measures.
“ He suffered the two gentlemen to come to his house at the appointed
“ hour, and even there refused to see them, though deputed in your name,
“ and under the sanction of your authority. Several conferences had taken
“ place with the Earl of Fingal, whose attachment to our cause was too sin-
“ cere not to lament, that any difference of opinion should exist; but having
“ hitherto acted in conjunction with Lord Kenmare, he declared himself
“ reluctant to join in any measure without the concurrent approbation of
“ the noble viscount. Nor was it till shortly before the hour appointed by
“ Mr. Secretary Hobart, that your committee received information, that the
“ noble lords would meet them at the castle.

“ In this interview with the minister, we delivered, through the hands of
“ the Earl of Fingal, a copy of the petition intended to be presented to par-
“ liament. Here we beg leave to arrest your attention. A charge of a
“ serious nature has been made. We are far from imputing to any particu-
“ lar person the indecorous assertions, injurious misrepresentations, and un-
“ natural triumphs, at every obstacle that did arise to damp our exertions,
“ had they been confined to our proceedings whilst we were strictly and li-
“ terally pursuing your instructions, we should have passed them unnoticed;
“ but your committee cannot remain silent under the imputation of having
“ trifled with your authority, and surprized the noble lords, by presenting a
“ copy of your resolutions without any previous communication. That
“ such a copy was presented without communication, is true; but that the
“ production of it was an object of indispensable necessity; that by with-
“ holding it your committee would have proved themselves unworthy of
“ your confidence, and the interest of the Catholic cause received an irrepara-
“ ble injury, is equally true. It is still fresh in your recollection, that on
the

“ the last night of the general meeting, one nobleman, in person, and the
 “ other through the mouth of a gentleman, who declared himself authorized
 “ to speak in his name, refused to coincide in your measures. You have
 “ also been informed of the repeated and unsuccessful attempts that were
 “ made to prevail on them to sacrifice their private sentiments to the general
 “ opinion of their fellow sufferers. Thus deprived of the countenance of
 “ those, who were in the habit of addressing administration in the name of
 “ the Catholics, it became incumbent on your committee to produce some
 “ authentic document, to shew that in presenting themselves before his ma-
 “ jesty’s ministers, they were not an obtruding, self-created deputation, nor
 “ even the delegates of a numerous body of Catholics assembled in the
 “ metropolis; but that they were authorized to act on behalf, and that their
 “ language was the language of their brethren through the kingdom. The
 “ determination of the noble lords to meet our committee at the castle, ren-
 “ dered this expedient unnecessary. They, however, deemed it not unad-
 “ viseable to carry with them a copy of your resolutions, in case any unfore-
 “ seen circumstance should call on them to make use of it. The event fully
 “ justified their caution. After their chairman had informed Mr. Secretary
 “ Hobart of the purpose of this deputation, your committee, with equal
 “ astonishment and regret, heard the noble viscount declare, in the name of
 “ the Catholics, intentions different from what they had resolved upon, and
 “ from what your committee, in consequence of your resolution, had com-
 “ municated to the minister in writing. What views could have induced
 “ the noble lord to make such a declaration, it is difficult to conjecture. Had
 “ not your committee adopted the expedient alluded to, they would have
 “ been reduced to the alternative of entering, before Mr. Secretary Hobart,
 “ into a discussion equally unpleasant in itself, and injurious in its conse-
 “ quences; or of suffering the mis-statement of an individual, to obstruct the
 “ wishes of the entire Catholic body. By presenting the copy of your reso-
 “ lutions they were relieved, to their complete satisfaction, from the effects of
 “ so serious a mistake.

“ Your committee having thus eluded the imprudence of the noble lord,
 “ had still the mortification to find him counteracting their measures; for
 “ on the day following their interview with the minister, he wrote to the
 “ secretary to disavow those resolutions, which he had not then read, and
 “ which had received the approbation of two general committees, at each of
 “ which

“ which the Earl of Fingal had presided. Your committee, with deference,
 “ submit how irregular and unwarrantable it is in any individual, who has
 “ declined joining in your deliberations, to take upon himself to condemn,
 “ even obliquely, proceedings, with the nature of which, from his own in-
 “ difference, or neglect, he must be totally unacquainted.

“ An immediate application to parliament next engaged the attention of
 “ your committee. They addressed themselves to several persons high in
 “ rank and consequence, equally respected by administration, and endeared
 “ to their fellow subjects, by their private and public virtues. Your com-
 “ mittee are happy to inform you, that every member of the legislature to
 “ whom the intentions of the Catholics were made known, approved, in the
 “ most unqualified terms, of the moderate and constitutional steps they had
 “ resolved to pursue, and expressed the fullest conviction of their loyalty, and
 “ of the claim which an uniform good conduct had given them to the li-
 “ berality of parliament. From the advanced period, however, of the session,
 “ from the difficulty of communicating, in so short a time, with their re-
 “ spective political connexions, or of bestowing on the subject that attention
 “ which its importance required, your sincerest well-wishers recommended to
 “ your committee to postpone the intended application.

“ Satisfied, that by the public discussion of your situation, the end had
 “ been in a great measure attained, for which you wished that the petition
 “ had been presented this session, your committee thought it prudent to com-
 “ ply with the advice of their friends; and as a further mark of their re-
 “ spect to government, they gave immediate information of their intention
 “ to Mr. Secretary Hobart.

“ Under these circumstances, your committee beg leave to resign into
 “ your hands the trust which you have delegated to their care, with an hum-
 “ ble hope, that their exertions may prove not unacceptable. They men-
 “ tion to you, with pleasure, the happy impression which has been made on
 “ the minds of your fellow subjects by that spirit of moderation, which has
 “ hitherto presided over your deliberations, and directed your measures.
 “ The liberality of the times is favorable to your efforts. The prejudices en-
 “ tertained against you will subside in proportion as your principles and sen-
 “ timents are made known and discussed; and your committee may venture
 “ to assure you, that submissive and constitutional applications are the only
 VOL. II. T T “ effectual

“ effectual means, by which you can hope to obtain a mitigation of the penal laws.

“ *Resolved*, That the thanks of this meeting be given to our sub-committee, for their attention to our instructions, and the zeal with which they discharged the trust reposed in them.

“ *Resolved*, That it is the opinion of this committee, to persevere in dutiful and submissive applications to parliament for a mitigation of the penal laws ; and that a committee of twenty-one be now appointed for that purpose.”

The summer past over without any circumstance of notability relative to the Catholic body ; though it appear, highly probable that measures were carrying on in concert for establishing a permanent union of interest between the Protestants of the north (chiefly Dissenters) and the body of Roman Catholics. In the month of June, 1791, a paper was circulated in Dublin, containing the design of an association to be called the Society of United Irishmen at Belfast : and a complete plan or prospectus of the society was published in the Northern Star in October following ; and in the same month the Roman Catholics published a declaration of their tenets and pretensions, and circulated them through the kingdom, in order to remove prejudices, and spirit up the exertions of their friends in their cause.* In the ensuing month of November, a similar society of United Irishmen was established at Dublin : their declaration was the same as that of Belfast : but a test was annexed to it.† To this society Mr. James Napper Tandy was secretary, and Mr. Simon Butler chairman. The acts of this period are to be retailed, as they took place : not as they may now appear in the eyes of those, who consider every act or transaction as tainted with treason, because some of the actors in them were afterwards guilty of that offence. It appeared now to be the fixed system of the Castle to involve all societies, clubs, and associations, which were very numerous in Ireland, from the Whig Club downwards, in one common anathema of faction and sedition. The press teemed with publications on the great political questions of the day, and the warfare was truly virulent. Lord

* This declaration was made on the 21st of October, 1791, and may be seen in the Appendix, No. LXXXIV.

† It is requisite to shew, that these first societies of United Irishmen differed from those that afterwards entered into the rebellion. Here nothing was secret, nothing ambiguous, nothing inconsistent with the duty of a loyal subject. Their test and constitution are to be seen in the Appendix, No. LXXXV.

Fitzgibbon's book, reviving the question of the regency, produced several acrimonious answers. The severe attacks on the Whig Club were answered with great ability and warmth. Opposition could scarcely be pushed to more severe hostilities. Every expression of attention to any popular character, was an offence of no mean standard at the Castle: and the resentments were always represented by the opposite parties as personal and vindictive.

When the Earl of Charlemont failed for England to conduct his daughter to the Bath waters, the Whig Club, and all the volunteer corps in Dublin, attended him under arms to the water edge, and paid him the like honours on his return. In the course of this summer this venerable nobleman found himself under the necessity of resigning the government of the county of Armagh: a confidential honor, which his ancestors had uninterruptedly enjoyed from the days of Elizabeth: he considered the joint appointment of another nobleman with him in that government, as an offence and insult. At this time his lordship's predilections for the dissenters seem to have been particularly obnoxious to government; and many circumstances concur in proving, that the determined efforts of the northern dissenters in the cause of liberty, were infinitely more dreaded by government, than the claims or attempts of the Catholics for their emancipation. Lord Charlemont* was still averse from admitting the Catholics into any participation of the state.

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* It was not till the year 1796, that Lord Charlemont changed his opinion upon this subject, having then voted for their being admitted to the elective franchise. At the time the following address was written to his lordship:

“ When a project is brought forward, professing to advance the prosperity, and more firmly to secure the constitution of Ireland, the looks and thoughts of men are naturally directed to Lord Charlemont: To a patriot nobleman, whose life, his labours alike and relaxations, have been consecrated to the service of his country: in the field, in the senate, in the cabinet; mingling literature with arms, tempering politics with philosophy: neglecting, when the public exigencies required it, the cultivation of an elegant mind to join in military exercises, and set the example of assiduity and ardour: returning, when the necessity had passed away, to encourage science in the land wherein he had planted freedom; erecting the temple of liberty, and courting every muse to decorate the edifice. Excuse, my lord, this intrusion; there is a sort of established prescription for soliciting your notice when Ireland is the object, and the theme is freedom; it is a price exacted for the situation you are placed in, the most enviable a man can hold; loved, admired, and venerated by an entire people.

“ I am aware, my lord, that on a former occasion, you did not seem to concur in that sentiment, which it is the object of this essay to impress and to disseminate; if it were my design to flatter, I

The anniversary commemoration of the French revolution was celebrated on the 14th of July, with the most solemn festivity and a gala, by the inhabitants and neighbourhood of Belfast, the more strongly to mark their sympathy with the French revolution. All the armed corps of volunteers attended, and fired several feus de joie; many striking emblems in allusion to the revolution of 1688, were displayed, to mark their horror of despotism and arbitrary power.

“ should turn with a courtier’s precaution from this contrariety; but relying on your lordship’s candour, I recall the subject, but I recall it to expostulate, not to censure; how should I censure the man, who opposes to reproof the seven-fold shield of public virtue and private benignity? Let it stand as the most ample testimony to your good sense, that you are requested to reconsider an opinion once delivered, and of your importance in the nation, that discussing a great state question, it is my wish to make your lordship my first profelyte.

“ So deeply rooted are our antipathies to many amongst us, the very name of popery is an abomination; they start at the most remote hint of indulgence to that hated people: such considerations could never have influenced Lord Charlemont; when, mylord, the authority of your great name was opposed to the career of liberality, the intended alteration must have appeared inexpedient. I know that many wise, and honorable persons, who, like you, feel warmly for the rights of mankind, are induced to think the Roman Catholics not prepared to receive civil liberty. I cannot assent to this doctrine; and upon this, as well as upon other parts of the subject, may I indulge my vanity with a hope that additional lights are to be offered; yet should I fail in impressing upon your lordship the wished-for conviction, I must continue to respect, even in a virtuous mind, what I am constrained to class among its foibles.

“ Brutus says they are ambitious.

“ But Brutus is an honorable man.”

“ It will be amidst the improvements of a future period, that the parties, which now distract the country, shall be extinguished; and the motives, which at this day indispose very honest men to the cause of the Roman Catholics, be neglected or forgotten; the stream of time as it wafts to posterity the events of this important æra, will not buoy up the various feelings, by which individuals are actuated; when at that day, my lord, history records your name amongst the illustrious worthies, who have used their rank but as the instrument of public advantage, with the Hornes, the Egmonts, and the Nassaus, or with your own Rockingham and Saville: it will be enquired with amazement, why the benevolent friend of mankind should acquiesce in what then may appear unjust privation; the disinterested patriot should countenance what will seem not calculated to promote his country’s interest: on this side alone will malignity attempt to whisper misrepresentation; on this act alone will fame be silent; or as she extends the annals of your life, an example to future noblemen, on this page only will she drop a tear, and suffer it, like the disfavoured victories of Condé, to be torn from her record.” This alluded to a figure of the great Condé at Chantilly: Fame is represented holding to view the history of his life; but the pages supposed to contain the account of those victories he gained against his country, are represented at his feet, torn from the book.

And

And a most sympathetic address or declaration on the occasion, was sent to the society of the Friends of the Constitution at Bourdeaux.*

These

* Their answer shews the boasted sympathy, which at that time existed between these gentlemen in the north, and the French revolutioners. It was received by Mr. Sharman, the president of the meeting.

“ The SOCIETY of the FRIENDS of the CONSTITUTION, at Bourdeaux, to the VOLUNTEERS
“ and INHABITANTS of the town and environs of Belfast, in Ireland.

FRIENDS AND BRETHREN !

“ YES, generous Irishmen !—Receive this appellation, which we have hitherto granted, *exclusively*, to Frenchmen, true friends of our constitution. Receive it, notwithstanding the distance which separates us; the difference of our idioms, and of our manners : Men inspired by a love of the human kind, and the spirit of liberty, are mutually attracted, however distant their situations : there is nothing intermediate between them, were they placed at different extremities of the globe. The citizens who agreed to the Declaration concluded on at Belfast, on the 14th July, 1791, are then *all our Brethren and our Friends*.

“ Your address, read the 12th of this month, at one of the public sittings of our society, and frequently interrupted by universal bursts of applause, has filled our souls with sentiments of delight ; in contemplating the purity, the compass, and the energy of your maxims respecting the natural and political rights of man. We fancied we beheld the standard of liberty, which philosophy at this day unfurls in every part of Europe, arrested in its progress on the rock of Ireland, to receive the new homage of an enlightened people.

“ The truth of your sentiments ; the depth of your reflections ; the gracefulness of your expressions, recalled to our recollection those celebrated bards, those immortal poets, whom the rage of the tyrannous Edward pursued with his most cruel prosecutions, to stifle the voices of the country, of honor, and of liberty.

“ France has given the signal of a bold insurrection against all prejudices ; against all abuses ; against all illegitimate authorities. May it, *as you desire*, become general among the human race ! That day, friends and brethren, will arrive ; when the different parts of the civilized world shall raise together their eloquent voice ; which, like that of Belfast, shall assert the rights of the people, and teach them to recover them by the empire of reason, and the power of the laws.

“ Receive, friends and brethren, the congratulations and thanks of a free people, transmitted to you through us, as their organ, for the example which you yourselves lately gave to the universe !

“ We congratulate you on the talents displayed in the exposition of your principles respecting the nature and end of government. We congratulate you on the sagacity, the noble freedom, with which you have pointed out the influence of the French revolution on the happiness of every people. We congratulate you on the courage, with which you force tyrants to listen to expressions of that lively interest which you take in our fate ; to hear the prayer which you address to God, that he may protect us with his power ; to attend above all, to the ardent vows which you have offered up for our success. In fine, we congratulate you, *brethren and friends*, on the respect which you have shewn to the National Assembly of France, by addressing to it directly your declaration,

These public acts of communication of the Protestants in the north with France, gave particular offence to government, who manifested great jealousy and diffidence towards all persons connected with them. Mr. Tone had been secretary to the Catholic committee, and Messrs. Simon Butler, and William Todd Jones, were their avowed friends and advocates. Several therefore, of the Roman Catholic gentlemen of landed property, who disapproved of this general system of political measures pursued by these societies, in order to express their horror of co-operating in any degree with such men and measures, seceded formally from the Catholic committee; and on the 27th of December, 1791, presented to the lord-lieutenant a petition or address, which went no farther than a general expression of submissiveness and respect to government, throwing themselves and their body upon their humanity and wisdom.*

On the 30th of December, 1791, the United Irishmen of Dublin held a special session, at which they approved of a circular letter, which was calculated to encourage similar societies; and to it they annexed a declaration of their political sentiments, and the test which they had taken, as a social and sacred compact, to bind them more closely together.† They also in their publications animadverted severely upon the 64 addressers. The general disposition to republicanism which appeared in the publications, and whole conduct of these new societies, became daily more and more obnoxious to government: they were chiefly composed of Dissenters: the several leading

“claration. Ah! that you could conceive the degree in which that brilliant act of admiration has penetrated our souls with joy and gratitude!—that you could conceive how much all good Frenchmen are touched, honored, filled with noble pride, when they behold the just tribute of applause, which they themselves unceasingly offer to their regenerate assembly, passing from mouth to mouth, from clime to clime; to that council of Sages, who thus enjoy, before hand, the glory with which posterity will be crowned.

“We are, with the most tender affection,

“Friends and Brothers,

“The members of the Society of the Friends of the Constitution, at Bourdeaux.

“AZEMA, President,

“CHAPELLE, Secretary.

“At Bourdeaux, 14th of August, 1791, in

“the third year of our liberty.”

* A copy of the address, with the names of those who subscribed it, is to be seen in the Appendix, No. LXXXVI. It highly displeased the opposite party, and many severe things were said upon the 64 addressers: some called it an eleemosynary address.

† For this declaration, vide Appendix, No. LXXXVII.

men

men amongst them were Protestants of the established church: it was believed and constantly preached up by the Castle, that this new, violent, and affectionate attachment of the Dissenters for their Roman Catholic brethren, proceeded not from any sentiment of liberality or toleration, but purely to engage the co-operation of the great mass of the people the more warmly in forwarding the several popular questions lately brought before parliament. The truth, however is, that their marked forwardness to applaud and sympathize with the French innovators had caused suspicions in many strong abettors of those very points, that the ulterior views of the societies then formed, (into which the Catholics were not admitted), tended to objects beyond the known limits of the constitution. From that time shyness, jealousy, and distrust, subsisted between those new societies and the Whig Club, though the agents and writers for government attempted to identify their views, measures and principles, as appears by the newspapers, and other publications of that day.

In the County of Armagh, the local differences and internal warfare of the *Defenders* and *Peep of Day Boys*, were carried on with increased acrimony: duration naturally extended the evil; and the extension gave the Defenders the superiority of numbers: they in their turn became occasionally assailants and aggressors. The *Peep of Day Boys* occupied with their own contest, gave not into the enlarged views of liberality and attachment to the Catholics, which distinguished all the public acts of their brethren at Belfast and Dublin. Here, on the contrary, appeared all the bitterness of ancient puritanical rancour against popery: and it is not improbable, that the refusal of the Earl of Charlemont to countenance and abet the ferocious efforts of the *Peep of Day Boys* against the *Defenders*, became the immediate cause of a partner having been imposed upon him in the government of that province. For at the spring assizes for the county of Armagh, 1791, the grand jury and high sheriff entered into the following resolutions:

“ That a rage among the Roman Catholics, for illegally arming themselves, has of late taken place, and is truly alarming; in order then to put a stop to such proceedings, and to restore tranquillity, we do pledge ourselves to each other, as magistrates and individuals, and do hereby offer a reward of five guineas, for the conviction of each of the first twenty persons, illegally armed and assembled as aforesaid.”

An address presented by the Ulster volunteers, to their general, Lord Charlemont, after his return from England, on the occasion of a coadjutor

jutor having been appointed with him in the government of Armagh, strongly marked the deep sense of the affront they still conceived had been put upon him by such an unprecedented appointment. And shortly after some spirited resolutions were entered into, and an address presented by the Belfast volunteers to those of Dublin on the subject of the Armagh resolutions, expressing sentiments of toleration similar to those contained in the resolutions of the Dublin Independents, and the other volunteer corps of the metropolis. Publications were industriously circulated, that the most distant idea of intolerance was thus warmly disclaimed on all hands, and in every quarter of the kingdom. Did the people of Ulster entertain any thing like disaffection to their Roman Catholic brethren, it was in Belfast, the largest and most populous town of the province, that the symptoms of it would have been most prevalent. Happily there no such disaffection had existed: on the contrary, a spirit of manly and enlightened liberality, which promised to promote and perpetuate that national unanimity, on which depended the hopes and prosperity of the kingdom. Resolutions of the Independent Dublin volunteers, and those of the delegates from the Protestant members of the other corps were published, expressive of feelings and sentiments, which proved that the appellation of Irish volunteers should mean what it originally meant, friends of universal and equal liberty; devoted enemies to religious bigotry and intolerance to usurpation of the common rights of man, and the base subjection of the many to the few. It was to be lamented, that an avowal of those generous sentiments had been called forth by a misconception of some of their fellow countrymen, no less zealous than others in the cause of general freedom; no less inimical to the bigotted intolerance of the sixteenth century.

Misconception it was that could ever have brought any description of the people of Ulster under the disgraceful charge of bigotry and intolerance. The gloomy cloud of superstition, which lately enveloped the greater part of Europe in all the horrors of religious dissention, of cruel and relentless persecution, was already dissipated by the increased and increasing light of philosophy and reason, even in those countries where it was most dense, and its influence most mischievous. It was not to be supposed that any vestige of it remained in a country like that so long exercised in contemplating the rights of men and nations, for much less attention to abstract politics than Ireland had indulged in, would have shewn, that persecution for religious opinions was incompatible with the law of nature, of society, and of God. The Armagh resolutions

resolutions might possibly contain some incautious expressions, but the expressions of men of known fidelity to the cause of civil and religious freedom, and to the general interests of the kingdom, inseparably connected with the concord of its inhabitants, candor would interpret with indulgence; nor would ~~the~~ wrest an unguarded phrase into proof incontrovertible of treason against the rights of Irishmen. Certainly the men of Armagh might have laboured for the restoration of peace in their county, which, beyond doubt, was their only object, without resorting to expressions, which seemed to asperse a general denomination of loyal subjects. To adopt such expressions was imprudent in them, and probably an inadvertent error: they would, no doubt, have magnanimity enough to come forward and disavow the principles. As for a spirit of intolerance among the Protestants of Ulster, it was purely ideal, and those who were acquainted with the state of political and religious sentiment in that province knew it to be so. The common enemies of both Protestants and Catholics, who wished to depress the power of each by playing off one against another, were those who alone endeavoured to persuade the people of Ireland of its existence, and who would fain give it being, and call it into action, to serve as an instrument of oppression. The people of Ireland were warned to be on their guard against the deep artifice; a spirit of brotherly forbearance could alone frustrate the design of the common enemy: nor could their country derive any good but from the unanimity of all denominations of its people.

The year 1792, opened scenes peculiarly important to the fate of Ireland. Some years had past without any parliamentary proceeding relative to the bulk of the nation, which never ceased to feel and latterly to express their suffering under the existing code of penal laws, affecting persons professing the Catholic religion. In consequence of some of the warmest advocates for the Catholic claims having resorted to general and abstract reasoning, they greatly suffered in the eyes of government and the majority of parliament. It was at this time difficult to suggest a general ground of civil freedom, without being suspected of being tainted with Gallic licentiousness. The whole Catholic body on some ground or other, was now worked up to an absolute expectation of relief. The addressers superadded to the equitable grounds of their claims, the submissiveness and respect of their application, and their confidence in the humanity and generosity of government. The petitioners relied more on the irresistible force of truth and equity, than on the liberality

or justice of government. Prudence however taught them, that some attention was to be paid to appearances and prejudices. It has been observed, that the great political change in the public mind, had been produced by the writings of Messrs. Burke and Payne: between these two extremes, no middle post was tenable. In order, therefore, to purge themselves in the eyes of government of any of that sort of levelling democracy, which was so peculiarly obnoxious to government, the Catholic committee chose for their council and agent the son of Mr. Burke, conceiving, that he would give no advice, concur in no measure, abet no step, without the privity, direction and approbation of his father: and it was no unfair conclusion on the part of the generality of the Catholic body, that whatever was backed and supported by Mr. Burke,* could not be urged or claimed upon French principles. It appears

* It had been concerted, and it was soon after well known, that Mr. Burke's particular friend, Sir Hercules Langrishe, was to bring forth the Roman Catholic bill. Mr. Burke on the occasion wrote a very able letter or rather a most constitutional essay on the subject to his friend. This letter is of very material importance to the history of the progress of Catholic emancipation. Sir Hercules Langrishe was the man fixed upon by government to bring forward the subject of their claims. He had always been favorably disposed to them: but his sentiments had been latterly altered by the fashionable cry against all popular claims, and the fear he was under of shewing any degree of opposition to the system of the castle, which ever had been the polar star of his political navigation. Mr. Burke therefore tells him, that he wished his ideas had been more his own. In consenting to stand forward on this occasion, the baronet appears to have acted with extraordinary caution: he communicated both his own and all other persons objections against the claims of the Catholics: he furnished him with all the letters and publications written upon the subject by Catholics and others, and in a letter of the 10th December, 1791, most pointedly urged him to deliver his opinions upon the whole case before him. Mr. Burke on the 3d of January, 1792, gave him that learned and liberal opinion upon the subject of elective franchise, which probably reconciled the British minister to the propriety, justice, and necessity of acceding to their demands. It was avowedly written to meet every species of objection: political, legal, constitutional, moral, local, permanent and provisional. It was calculated to remove the prejudices of the church of England, and every species of Protestant Dissenter, and above all supereminently demonstrative of the compatibility of Catholic emancipation, with the coronation oath. With the full objection to the democracy of some few of the Catholics before his eyes: he thus spoke. " It becomes an object of very serious consideration, whether, because wicked men of various descriptions are engaged in seditious courses, the rational, sober, and valuable part of one description should not be indulged their sober and rational expectations? You who have looked deeply into the spirit of the Popery laws, must be perfectly sensible, that a great part of the present mischief, which we abhor in common, has arisen from them. If the absurd persons you mention, find no way of providing for liberty, but by overturning this happy constitution, and introducing a frantic democracy, let us take care how we prevent

pears to have been well understood between the British and Irish cabinets, that the opinions and countenance of Mr. Burke, at this period the triumphant

“ prevent better people from any rational expectations of partaking in the benefits of that constitution as it stands. The maxims you establish cut the matter short. They have no sort of connexion with the good or ill behaviour of the persons who seek relief, or with the proper or improper means by which they seek it. They form a perpetual bar to all pleas and all expectations.

“ There is another way of taking an objection to this concession, which I admit to be something more plausible, and worthy of a more attentive examination. It is that this numerous class of people is mutinous, disorderly, prone to sedition, and easy to be wrought upon by the insidious arts of wicked and designing men; that conscious of this, the sober, rational, and wealthy part of that body, who are totally of another character, do by no means desire any participation for themselves, or for any one else of their description, in the franchises of the British constitution.

“ I have great doubt of the exactness of any part of this observation. But let us admit, that the body of the Catholics are prone to sedition (of which, as I have said, I entertain much doubt), is it possible, that any fair observer or fair reasoner, can think of confining this description to them only? I believe it to be possible for men to be mutinous and seditious who feel no grievance: but I believe no man will assert seriously, that when people are of a turbulent spirit, the best way to keep them in order, is to furnish them with something substantial to complain of.

“ The popular meeting from which apprehensions have been entertained, has assembled. I have accidentally had conversation with two friends of mine, who knew something of the gentleman who was put into the chair upon that occasion; one of them has had money transactions with him, the other, from curiosity, has been to see his concerns: they both tell me he is a man of some property; but you must be the best judge of this, who by your office, are likely to know his transactions. Many of the others are certainly persons of fortune; and all, or most, fathers of families, men in respectable ways of life; and some of them far from contemptible, either for their information, or for the abilities which they have shewn in the discussion of their interests. What such men think it for their advantage to acquire, ought not, *prima facie*, to be considered as rash or heady, or incompatible with the public safety or welfare.

“ You have sent me several papers, some in print, some in manuscript. I think I had seen all of them except the formula of association. I confess they appear to me to contain matter mischievous, and capable of giving alarm, if the spirit in which they are written should be found to make any considerable progress. But I am at a loss to know how to apply them, as objections to the case now before us. When I find that the general committee which acts for the Roman Catholics in Dublin, prefers the association proposed in the written draft you have sent me, to a respectful application in parliament, I shall think the persons who sign such a paper, to be unworthy of any privilege, which may be thought fit to be granted; and that such men ought, by name, to be excepted from any benefit under the constitution to which they offer this violence.

phant and unrivalled champion of church and state throughout Great Britain, should be permitted to have currency and support also through the kingdom

“ But I do not find that this form of a seditious league has been signed by any person whatsoever, either on the part of the supposed projectors, or on the part of those whom it is calculated to seduce. I do not find, on enquiry, that such a thing was mentioned, or even remotely alluded to, in the general meeting of the Catholics, from which so much violence was apprehended. I have considered the other publications, signed by individuals, on the part of certain societies; I may mistake, for I have not the honor of knowing them personally, but I take Mr. Butler and Mr. Tandy not to be Catholics, but members of the established church. Not one that I recollect of these publications, which you and I equally dislike, appears to be written by persons of that persuasion. Now, if, whilst a man is dutifully soliciting a favor from parliament, any person should chuse, in an improper manner, to shew his inclination towards the cause depending; and if that must destroy the cause of the petitioner, then, not only the petitioner, but the legislature itself is in the power of any weak friend or artful enemy, that the supplicant, or that the parliament may have. A man must be judged by his own actions only. Certain Protestant Dissenters make seditious propositions to the Catholics, which it does not appear that they have yet accepted. It would be strange that the tempter should escape all punishment, and that he who, under circumstances full of seduction and full of provocation, has resisted the temptation, should incur the penalty. You know, that, with regard to the Dissenters, who are stated to be the chief movers in this vile scheme of altering the principles of election to a right of voting by the head, you are not able (if you ought even to wish such a thing) to deprive them of any part of the franchises and privileges which they hold on a footing of perfect equality with yourselves. They may do what they please with constitutional impunity; but the others cannot even listen with civility to an invitation from them to an ill-judged scheme of liberty, without forfeiting, for ever, all hopes of any of those liberties which we admit to be sober and rational. It is known I believe, that the greater, as well as the sounder part of our excluded countrymen, have not adopted the wild ideas, and wilder engagements, which have been held out to them; but have rather chosen to hope small and safe concessions from the legal power, than boundless objects from trouble and confusion. This mode of action seems to me to mark men of sobriety, and to distinguish them from those who are intemperate, from circumstance or from nature.

“ Such, my dear Sir, is the plain nature of the argument drawn from the revolution maxims, enforced by a supposed disposition in the Catholics to unite with the Dissenters. Such it is, though it were clothed in never such bland and civil forms, and wrapped up, as a poet says, in a thousand “ artful folds of sacred lawn.” For my own part, I do know in what manner to shape such arguments, so as to obtain admission for them into a rational understanding. Every thing of this kind is to be reduced, at last, to threats of power. I cannot say *væ victis*, and then throw the sword into the scale. I have no sword; and if I had, in this case most certainly I would not use it as a make-weight, in political reasoning.

“ Observe, on these principles, the difference between the procedure of the parliament and the Dissenters, towards the people in question. One employs courtship, the other force. The Dissenters

kingdom of Ireland. The great object of political attention throughout Ireland in the year 1792, was the question of opening some constitutional rights

“ dissenters offer bribes, the parliament nothing but the front negative of a stern and forbidding authority. A man may be very wrong in his ideas of what is good for him. But no man affronts me, nor can therefore justify my affronting him, by offering to make me as happy as himself, according to his own ideas of happiness. This the Dissenters do to the Catholics. You are on the different extremes. The Dissenters offer, with regard to constitutional rights and civil advantages of all sorts, every thing; you refuse every thing. With them, there is boundless, though not very assured hope; with you, a very sure and very unqualified despair. The terms of alliance, from the Dissenters, offer a representation of the commons, chosen out of the people by the head. This is absurdly and dangerously large, in my opinion, and that scheme of election is known to have been, at all times, perfectly odious to me. But I cannot think it right of course, to punish the Irish Roman Catholics by an universal exclusion, because others, whom you would not punish at all, propose an universal admission. I cannot dissemble, to myself, that in this very kingdom, many persons who are not in the situation of the Irish Catholics, but who on the contrary, enjoy the full benefit of the constitution as it stands, and some of whom, from the effect of their fortunes, enjoy it in a large measure, had some years ago associated to procure great and undefined changes (they considered them as reforms) in the popular part of the constitution. Our friend, the late Mr. Flood (no slight man) proposed in his place, and in my hearing, a representation not much less extensive than this, for England; in which every house was to be inhabited by a voter, in addition to all the actual votes by other titles, all those (some of the corporate) which we know do not require a house, or a shed. Can I forget that a person of the very highest rank, of very large fortune, and of the very first class of ability, brought a bill into the House of Lords, in the head quarters of aristocracy, containing identically the same project, for the supposed adoption of which, by a club or two, it is thought right to extinguish all hopes in the Roman Catholics of Ireland? I cannot say it was very eagerly embraced, or very warmly pursued. But the lords neither did disavow the bill, nor treat it with any disregard, nor express any sort of disapprobation of its noble author, who has never lost, with king or people, the least degree of the respect and consideration which so justly belongs to him.

“ Several are in dread of the manœuvres of certain persons among the Dissenters, who turn this ill humour to their own ill purposes. You know, better than I can, how much these proceedings of certain among the Dissenters are to be feared. You are to weigh, with the temper which is natural to you, whether it may be for the safety of our establishment, that the Catholics should be ultimately persuaded, that they have no hope to enter into the constitution, but through the Dissenters.

“ Think; whether this be the way to prevent, or dissolve factious combinations against the church, or the state. Reflect seriously on the possible consequences of keeping, in the heart of your country, a bank of discontent, every hour accumulating, upon which every description of seditious men may draw at pleasure. They, whose principles of faction would dispose them to

“ the

rights to the Catholics. The transactions of this year have generally been represented as differently by the different persons, who have undertaken to rehearse them, as if they had retailed the acts and deeds of distinct centuries and distinct people. Although it be a matter of undoubted notoriety, that no member of opposition did bring forward or move any thing on behalf of the Catholics during the session, (except the presentation of petitions) and that the bill brought in by Sir Hercules Langrishe, a constant supporter of government, was long thought of, maturely digested and reflexedly approved of by government before it was ushered into the House of Commons: yet has that very circumstance been notoriously falsified by the Earl of Clare in the most solemn manner.

* “ With respect to the old code of the Popery laws, there cannot be a doubt that it ought to have been repealed. It was impossible that any country could continue to exist under a code, by which a majority of its inhabitants were cut off from the rights of property. But in the relaxation of these laws there was a fatal error. It should have been taken up systematically by the ministers of the crown, and not left in the hands of every individual, who chose to take possession of it, as an engine of power or popularity. This, however, was done; and before the subject attracted the notice of the servants of the crown, the Popery laws were unequivocally repealed so far as they affected the rights of property, were relaxed in every clause of intolerance, which affected the Popish worship; and the profession of the law was opened to persons of the Popish religion, without qualification or restriction. In 1792, a giddy young man, now no more, was brought over here from England by the Catholic committee, as their avowed agent, who, immediately after his arrival, commenced a warm canvass of the members of both houses of parliament for the political interests of his clients, and in the course of this canvass I can state, from my own knowledge, his great argument was, an unequivocal offer of the ser-

“ the establishment of an arbitrary monarchy, will find a nation of men who have no sort of interest in freedom; but who will have an interest in that equality of justice or favor, with which a wise despot must view all his subjects who do not attack the foundations of his power. Love of liberty itself may, in such men, become the means of establishing an arbitrary domination. On the other hand, they who wish for a democratic republic, will find a set of men who have no choice between civil servitude, and the entire ruin of a mixed constitution.”

* Speech of the Earl of Clare, on the 10th of February, 1800.

“ vices

“ vices of his clients to men, whose stations naturally gave them some weight
 “ in the public councils, to establish their political power on a basis not to
 “ be shaken, if they would put themselves at the head of the Catholic
 “ body.”*

The

* An account of these first transactions has been left us by the young man, whom the chancellor had thus charged with levity, who evidently acted under the advice of his father, and whose revising pen is discoverable through the stile, language, and sentiments of the whole pamphlet. It is intitled, *An Address from the general Committee of the Roman Catholics to their fellow Protestant Subjects, &c.* published in Dublin, 1792. Here we find the following account of the division of the Catholic body. (P. 5.) “ In the first place it is incumbent upon us to reduce the confused
 “ mass of obloquy, which has been heaped upon us, into some kind of certainty, both in its substance and in its application. We shall afterwards examine the grounds of it. For this purpose
 “ we are to premise, that a division, in the Catholic body, has been artfully imagined, and strongly
 “ insisted upon; of which one part is honored with the appellation of the real Catholics; the men
 “ of birth, property, education, character, morals, and understanding: The other part is represented, as a base, unlettered, mechanical, poor, and vulgar herd; the obscure tenants of the
 “ counting house, and the rude tillers of the soil; men incapable of comprehending the principles
 “ of society, or the ties of moral obligation.

“ First, it is proper to remark, that the distribution and contra-distinction of men, which is here
 “ supposed, implies an entire and previous dissolution of the social bond, and one which if ever it
 “ takes place, can only exist for the destruction of the superior class. But *fortunately* for the
 “ prosperity, the peace, and the honor of Ireland, no such division has yet been effected among the
 “ Roman Catholics. It is true indeed, that a division (if the defection of so small a number can
 “ be called a division) has been fomented, and yet subsists, which however it is to be lamented
 “ upon other grounds, is not of the nature above described. Two parties are seen amongst us,
 “ one composed of those who (from motives best known to themselves) have been induced to put
 “ their hands to the address of the 17th of December; for which act Lord Kenmare has been declared unworthy of our confidence: the other party consists on one hand, of this committee,
 “ (delegated for the purpose of transacting the concerns of the Roman Catholics), and on the
 “ other, of all those who have come forward in various resolutions of approbation to this committee, and of abhorrence of the imputations, which Lord Kenmare’s address has obliquely
 “ thrown upon us, but which many of the addressers themselves have since honorably disclaimed.

“ Of these two parties it is evident, that the pompous and encomiastic side of the picture above
 “ delineated, is meant to apply to the followers of Lord Kenmare; the vilifying and opprobrious
 “ expressions relate to this committee, and to those who have supported it. Before we proceed to
 “ expose the injustice of this application in both its parts, we wish to have it understood, that in
 “ discharging ourselves from illiberal reflections, we only mean to reject those which imply some
 “ evil moral quality. We should be far from the mean and insolent vanity, so unbecoming a
 “ Christian and a man, of taking pride in the accidents of birth, wealth, and education, in whatever degree we might possess them. We do not account ourselves better than those whom per-
 “ haps

The body of the Roman Catholics, though necessarily anxious to be relieved of the hardships they had so long laboured under, could not be altogether insensible of the new and unaccustomed sympathy and liberality of

“ haps a kinder providence, has placed in the most humble life, and who serve their generation
 “ with a more obscure, or a less successful industry. Why should indigence be insulted? We do
 “ not despise the poor, nor him, who with the sweat of his brow, bears all the burden of the com-
 “ mon curse. Our actions will shew, that we are not willing to sacrifice, for objects of avarice
 “ and ambition to ourselves and to our children, the necessary security, the just importance, the
 “ protecting franchise of the man, whose hard toil obtains from our mother earth the very bread
 “ we eat. When, therefore, it is asserted, that we are only the unlettered, poor, mechanical mem-
 “ bers of our persuasion; we deny it only because it is not the fact. As far as it regards ourselves,
 “ the imposture is less material. But, when it is considered, that it is not this committee alone,
 “ who are represented as destitute of property, character, and knowledge, incapable of discerning
 “ social good or public utility; but that all the Roman Catholics, who have stood forth on this oc-
 “ casion, the principal merchants of so many trading cities, the householders of all the parishes of
 “ this capital, the landed proprietors of so many counties, are involved in this indiscriminate re-
 “ proach of meanness, poverty and ignorance; common sense, and the feelings of mankind exact
 “ from us an authentic assertion of the truth. We declare then, and we are warranted in de-
 “ claring, that the names and characters of the persons who have signed resolutions in favor of the
 “ general committee, are of the first respectability in every class, and every line which the law
 “ has left open to us. Let those who have read their resolutions themselves judge of their capacity,
 “ and say whether they are, as has been insinuated, below the standard of the human faculties, and
 “ incapable of political combinations, or even of appreciating their own wants, and their own
 “ grievances.

“ It has been represented, that they have no stake in the prosperity of their country, and nothing
 “ to hazard in the event of public calamity. If we are to speak of their substance, to bring the
 “ estimate within the lowest possible calculation, we cannot compute the property of those, who
 “ have already signed resolutions in our favor (to say nothing of ourselves, or of those who are yet
 “ to sign) at less than ten millions sterling; we should come nearer the truth, if we should say
 “ twenty millions. If mercantile, and personal wealth constitutes the greater part of this sum, it
 “ is because the property of the Roman Catholics is principally vested in trade, and that we have
 “ been long incapable, and are but lately qualified to acquire real estates. But though Providence
 “ has not frowned upon our humble industry, we repeat it again, that we solicit relief not for the
 “ sake of the rich, but for the sake of the poor. And if we were all sunk (as too many of us are)
 “ in one dreary lot of hopeless poverty, we should only possess a stronger claim to the charities of
 “ parliament, and one argument more for a participation in equal laws.

“ But it is said these addressers are the landed interest. A landed interest is certainly respectable,
 “ and deserves much, but not the whole attention of a legislature; that is to say, where it is united,
 “ and not when it is in a state of unnatural separation from the general mass of property. It so
 “ happens, however, that a much greater proportion of that very property is with the committee,
 “ than with the followers of Lord Kenmare.”

any

any of their Protestant countrymen. The Catholics did not weigh to a scruple those differences, by which the religious tenets of the established church and the Dissenters varied from their own; nor did they open old accounts to discover, whether the asperity of Puritanical rigor had been softened by the assumption of Protestant ascendancy: those, who upon the broad basis of constitutional freedom adopted the principle of their emancipation could not but be received with cordiality, as the welcome heralds of the cessation of their bondage, and coadjutors in the glorious work of their delivery. Although the Catholics were not generally admitted into the different societies, which had lately been formed and instituted for promoting the great popular objects of civil freedom and reform: yet it was morally impossible, that many Catholic individuals should not at that time have sympathized with their Protestant brethren in the forwarding of those objects. Nothing however had been ever suggested, much less attempted by them as a body towards their attainment. Under the existing vehemence of political prejudice, it was found prudent in the body, to prove to the legislature as well as the nation at large, as the fact was, that the exertions of their body were exclusively confined to the relaxation of the penal code.*

On the 19th of January, 1792, the parliament was opened by a speech

* Thus were their exertions expressed by their agent Mr. R. Burke: “ We now proceed to shew, that the principles and conduct imputed to us, are equally destitute of foundation. It is said, that we are turbulent and seditious, that we have formed regular plans for the intimidation of parliament, and that instead of making application for favors, we assert claims of right, of speculative right unknown to the constitution, and subversive of society. These are the charges; we are not afraid to repeat them. Whether we intimidate, or are ourselves the object of intimidation, is for those to pronounce, who hear the imputations with which we are covered, and the vengeance which is denounced against us. What have we done, or what are we able to do, which makes it necessary for the newspapers and pamphlets of the day, to threaten us with the unfolded terrors of Irish, and even of British power? This we conceive is something like intimidation. But why is it, that while on one side we are reprobated as vile, and as of no account in the scale of public judgment: on the other, we are treated as enemies of the most dreadful importance? Such are the inconsistencies into which our enemies are hurried. It is the perturbation of the passions.

“ As to the committee we are to observe, that if it is an improper, it is at least no recent institution. It was formed about twenty years ago, under the immediate eye, and tacit sanction of government. From that time forward, all the parliamentary and general business of the Roman Catholics, has been transacted through that channel by every minister, and every public man, to this very day.”

from the throne, in which his excellency, after having communicated to them the marriage of the Duke of York with the Princess Royal of Prussia, observed, that the constant attention they had shewn to the interests of Ireland made it unnecessary to recommend to them a continuance of that wise system of policy, from which their country had received such inestimable advantages in the encrease of her trade, credit and manufactures. The address which was moved by Lord Thurles, and seconded by the Hon. G. Knox, imported the thanks of that house to his majesty for continuing in the government a lord lieutenant, who had shewn a zealous disposition to forward every measure, that might contribute to the public welfare; and that they were convinced of his decided resolution to support the due execution of the law; and that under his firm administration, they should feel confident of the maintenance of good order and government: upon which Mr. Grattan said, he most cheerfully concurred in every thing honorable to his majesty, and sincerely rejoiced in every circumstance, which could really add to his public and private happiness, which must give pleasure to every branch of his majesty's subjects, and to none more sincerely than to his loyal people of Ireland. They must ever rejoice in the auspicious increase of the illustrious House of Hanover, whose accession to the throne of these dominions had been attended with so many blessings to that country, as well as every other part of the empire. So far he was ready to concur in the address. But to that part of it, which went to declare thanks to his majesty, for continuing in the government of this country a lord lieutenant and an administration, whose measures he had found it necessary to oppose, and who had uniformly opposed every measure urged for the good of their country, he could not give his assent. Ten years had elapsed since they had recovered their constitution, and three since, in the opinion of some, they had lost it. Their present ministers had made two attempts on their liberties; the first had failed, and the second had succeeded. They could remember the propositions: the people of Ireland would not consent to be governed by the British parliament; an expedient was devised, let the Irish parliament govern the people of Ireland, and Britain govern the Irish parliament. She was to do so specifically in those subjects, in which she had been most oppressive; monopolies of commerce east and west. They were to put down the Irish constitution, in order to put up the monopoly against Irish commerce. The ministry, who conducted this trick, took care to make the Irish advance by a certain

certain number of propositions, under an assurance, that the British cabinet would to an iota accede, and they made the Irish parliament give an additional revenue on the faith of that accession. They then suffered the propositions to be reversed; turned them against the country, from which they were supposed to proceed, and made them fatal at once to their constitution, and to her commerce. The individuals concerned in that business, some of them had pledged themselves against an iota of alteration: they broke their honor. The Irish minister was pledged to a specific system; he prevaricated; in the attempt on her liberty he was a violator; in taking her taxes a swindler. This measure was defeated by the influence principally of that part of the Aristocracy, who refused to go through the bill; and who had been dismissed. They who made the attempt had been advanced and rewarded. The path of public treachery in a principal country leads to the block; but in a nation, governed like a province, to the helm.

The second attempt was their modelling of the parliament: in 1789, fifteen new salaries, with several new pensions to the members thereof, were created at once and added to the old overgrown parliamentary influence of the crown. In other words, the expenditure of the interest of half a million to buy the House of Commons; the sale of the peerage and the purchase of seats in the commons; the formation of a stock-purse by the minister to monopolize boroughs, and buy up representations. This new practice, whereby the minister of the crown becomes the common borough-broker of the kingdom, constitutes an offence so multitudinous and in all its parts so criminal, as to call for radical reformation, and exemplary punishment; whether the persons concerned be Lord Buckingham or his secretary, or those who became the objects of his promotion, because they had been the ministers of his vices. It was a conspiracy against the fundamental laws of the land, and fought to establish, and had established, in the place of a limited monarchy, a corrupt despotism; and if any thing rescued the persons so concerned from the name of traitors, it was not the principle of law, but its omission, that had not described by any express provisional statute that patricide, of which these men in intention, and in substance were guilty. They had adopted a practice, which decided the fate of their parliamentary constitution. In vain should they boast of its blessings, and of its three estates, the king, lords, and commons; when the king sold one estate to buy the other, and so contaminated both. The minister had sent one set of men packing into the peers, and another into the commons; the first he

called the hereditary council, the latter the grand council of the nation, and both, that once great and august institution, the parliament. Such a condition puts the constitution of Ireland not below a republic, but any other form of genuine and healthy government: it was not mixed monarchy with parts happily tempered, and so forth; the cant of grave and superannuated addresses; but a rank, and vile, and simple, and absolute government; rendered so by means, that made every part of it vicious and abominable; the executive who devoured the whole, and the other two parts, which were thus extinguished: of such a constitution, the component parts were debauched by one another. The monarch was made to prostitute the prerogative by the sale of honors; the lords by the purchase: and the commons prostituted their nature by being the offspring not of the people, but of a traffic; and prostituted themselves again by the sale of their votes and persons.

He allowed the British constitution to be the best; and arraigned this mode as the worst, because practically and essentially the opposite of that British constitution. The British minister had given an account of the English constitution, which he wished to extend to the Irish constitution: "Aristocracy," says he, "reflects lustre on the crown, and lends support and effect to democracy; while democracy gives vigour and energy to both; and the sovereignty crowns the constitution with dignity and authority.—Aristocracy is the poise," says he; "give an infusion of nobility." The minister here can answer him: he who sold the aristocracy and bought the democracy; he best understands in practice what is this infusion of nobility: he who has infused poison into this aristocratic and this democratic division of power, and has crowned the whole with corruption: he well knows all this, as far as Ireland is concerned, to be the theatric representation; and that the constitution of the country is exactly the reverse of those scenes and farces, which are acted on the public stages, of imposture and hypocrisy.

By this trade of parliament the king was absolute: his will was signified by both houses of parliament, who were then as much an instrument in his hand as a bayonet in the hands of a regiment. Like a regiment they had their adjutant, who sent to the infirmary for the old, and to the brothel for the young; and men thus carted as it were into that house to vote for the minister were called the representatives of the people.

Mr. Grattan then with an astonishing power of eloquence travelled over, once more, the whole ground, which he had taken each of the three last sessions,

sions, but with new point and redintegrated vigor. The chancellor of the Exchequer answered, that he was not surpris'd, that the right honorable gentleman, for want of other matter, should recapitulate the accumulated invective of many sessions; he should be extremely surpris'd, indeed, if this invective, so often refuted, should make any impression upon the house. If the right honorable gentleman supposed he should follow him through all that maze of charges, of propositions, of malt duties, of police, of India trade, and all that strange incongruous jumble, calculated to poison the public mind, he would request to be excus'd: they had been already refuted, and if they were brought forward in the course of the session, they would be refuted again. When the right honorable gentleman imputed to government crimes, that would disgrace an individual, a government conscious of its integrity, must disregard the imputation; but when he lightly charged parliament, he lowered parliament in the eyes of the public, and did a positive injury to the country. Since 1779, which he fix'd as the commencement of depravity, the parliament of Ireland had done more for the benefit of the kingdom, than all the antecedent parliaments from the days of Henry II. In that space, the country had advanced to a degree of prosperity unhop'd for, even by the most sanguine; yet that was the very period the right honorable gentleman thought fit to depreciate, by which he might do an evil that certainly he did not intend.*

On the 25th of January, 1792, Sir H. Langrishe rose, according to notice, to bring forward some resolutions in favor of the Catholics of that kingdom. He prefaced his motion by a warm and able, though very

* Several other gentlemen spoke on the side of government; amongst the most forward were Mr. Sheridan and Sir Henry Cavendish: the latter was very personal against Mr. Grattan, for the violence and intemperance of his language, and a disorderly extra dissertation on the measures of the lord lieutenant; which brought up Mr. Grattan in reply; who spoke thus: “ (12 P. D. p. 23) It seems the right honorable baronet is ignorant of the only subject he is supposed to be acquainted with, *order*. He talks of scurrilous language; his language and epithets return on himself: but a man’s language is of little moment; it is his conduct that is essential. What shall we say of the conduct of that man, who voted in one session for a pension bill and against it in the next; of that man, who voted for a place bill in one session and voted against it in the next; of that man, who voted for a committee to proceed towards impeachment against the present ministry for the selling peerages, and the very next sessions votes for thanks to that very ministry: what does he think of such an apostate?”

guarded

guarded speech.* It was then ten years since the cause of the Roman Catholics particularly engaged the attention of parliament; since they took their last review of those laws, which the passions and prejudices, perhaps the pressure, of an intemperate season had entailed upon them.

The present times and circumstances invited them to resume that duty. The good offices they owed one to another; the indulgence due to fellow subjects, recommended and endeared by the unimpeachable conduct of a century, the consideration they owed to the national prosperity, all united in calling their attention to the revision of that subject, at a time when the public mind was becoming more enlightened, and prejudices and jealousy were every day yielding to confidence and affection. With satisfaction he considered, amongst the few honors of his humble life, that of being almost the first member of the Irish parliament, who ventured to state the imprudence and immorality of the Popery laws, as a system of jurisprudence subversive of integrity, and as a scheme of government, which, whilst by its severity it alienated the body of the people, by its impolicy forbid them to vest in the state any hostage for their fidelity.

The agitation of truth must ever make an impression. Succeeding times became more enlightened, and religious animosity gave way to moral justice and political wisdom.

In the year 1774, the legislature first gratified the Roman Catholics with an opportunity of testifying their allegiance, by framing an oath for them, competent to that test, without involving any article of religious faith, or speculative opinion.

Four years afterwards (in 1778) the legislature, wisely confiding in their oaths, rewarded their loyalty by some substantial concession.

The act in their favor then passed, truly recites in the preamble, “that
“ from their uniform peaceable behaviour for a long series of years, it ap-
“ pears reasonable and expedient to relax several of their incapacities and
“ disabilities.”

Accordingly it allowed them “to take leases of land for nine hundred

* It is an irrefragable proof of the falsity of Lord Clare's position, that the question was left in the hands of every individual, who chose to take possession of it, as an engine of popularity or power. Sir Hercules said, he had communicated with as many members of parliament as he could (consequently with his own friends), and Mr. Secretary Hobart seconded the motion.

“ and ninety-nine years, and at any rent; to enjoy all such estates that
 “ should be left or transferred to them, and to dispose of the same by will or
 “ otherwise; and that they should be deviseable and transferable, as in the
 “ case of other people.”

The abominable usurpation of the child against the father was abolished; and to these concessions, the conditions annexed were: taking the oath of 1774; and that the law should not extend to converts relapsing, or to Protestants becoming Papists, or educating their children in the Popish religion. The legislature naturally considering, that some suspicion attached on frequent versatility of faith, and on those who professed a religion themselves, which they would not transmit to their posterity.

Four years after that (in 1782) the spirit of toleration further extended itself, and sound policy gained a further ascendancy in favor of the Roman Catholics. That system of severity, which a few years before was thought prudence, began to look something like injustice; and what prejudice had adopted as preservation, moderation began to view as little short of oppression.

In 1782, the capacity of acquiring land by purchase (which in 1778 was granted under a fiction) was given direct and entire.

“ The acquisition by purchase, grant, limitation, descent, or devise, by
 “ will or otherwise descendable, as the lands of Protestants,” was communicated to the Roman Catholics: some of their disabilities, as to education, were removed: the severe law was repealed, that compelled the Papists to declare on oath when, and where, and by whom they heard mass celebrated: the unequal attachment of their properties to make reprisals for common robberies, was discontinued: their houses were no more to be exposed as public plunder; and the preposterous, but offensive prohibition, whereby persons professing the Popish religion were forbidden to reside in certain cities, was repealed: they were allowed the full rights of property; the free exercise of religion; and to appoint guardians to their own children.

These were great efforts of liberality, in opposition to old opinions, and the usual acrimony of religious dissention, and a signal triumph over rooted prejudices. It disclosed such a growing confidence, such an amicable sympathy, such a relenting of heart, in the predominate powers of the state towards the Roman Catholics of the country, as ought to conciliate their affection, engage their gratitude, and confirm their attachment to the state. And in
 fact,

fact, such conduct of the legislature (he spoke with confidence and assurance, from the authority of experience) had produced those effects.

If he were not of that opinion, he would not stand as their advocate for another concession. For as the state is paramount, and all men who live under its protection, live under its controul, and are amenable to its superiority, if they approach the legislature, they must approach it by the avenues the constitution has marked out; if they apply to parliament, it must be by petition, not representation or remonstrance; if they would have benefits, they must solicit them as favors, and accept them as concessions. That was not only the constitution of Ireland, but the constitution of every settled government in the known world.

As to the natural rights of man (of which they had lately heard so much) they did not belong to political society; they belonged to that state of nature, which had been so accurately described by Mr. Hobbs, and so ardently recommended by Mr. Paine; a state where, indeed, the race was to the swift, and the battle to the strong; where possession was property, and strength was right; a state superior to the conditions of society, the restrictions of covenant, or the bondage of law.

Therefore he freely confessed, that notwithstanding his prepossessions in favor of the Roman Catholics, he was yet for some time checked in his ardor, and interrupted in the progress of his services to them, by reading lately a multitude of publications and paragraphs in the newspapers, and other prints circulated *gratis*, and communicated to every body, with every degree of industry, purporting to convey the sentiments of the Catholic body of Ireland.

If these were their sentiments, they were such as could not recommend them to the further favor of the state; they were such as must alienate their old, and could not get them new friends, if they would chuse their friends from amongst those, who were friends to the constitution. What was the import? They were exhortations to the people never to be satisfied at any concession, until the state itself was conceded; not only that, but until a new constitution should be made for their present accommodation, and future entertainment; they were precautions against public tranquillity; they were invitations to disorder, and covenants to discontent; they were ostentations of strength, rather than solicitations for favors; rather appeals to the powers of the people, than applications to the authority of the state; they involved the

the relief of the Catholic, with the revolution of the government, and were dissertations for democracy, rather than arguments for toleration; they seemed the projects of some bold theorists, whose principles were to divide man from man, and whose politics were to separate Great Britain from Ireland; they seemed to be the effusions of some rash philosopher, ignorant of our system, who would set loose and adrift the little planet we inhabit, and commit it to the vortex of a vain and exploded philosophy; to range the universe without attraction, connexion, or relation to any greater or other body.

If the Roman Catholics embraced those sentiments, the state could not embrace them: if they were misled by rash counsels to engage in confederacies of perpetual requisition; if they were not to be satisfied at any concession, whilst any thing remained to be conceded, in that case common sense must suggest, that they should not by any new concession unite more power with their discontent.

He had the happiness to assert from authority, what he had long learned from experience: "That not a sentiment of that tendency was entertained by the Catholic body; none such belonged to them; they renounced them; they utterly disclaimed them." There was not a class of his majesty's subjects more attached than they were to the monarchy and hereditary succession, more obedient to the laws, or more devoted to the king and constitution, as by law established.

These principles they had testified by their conduct at all times; at times very different from the present, when the laws were less indulgent, when they had fewer pledges to bind them to their country; when property and the titles of land were not irrevocably fixed; at times when hostile fleets and armies were on their coast, and when even the king on the throne, by some may not have been supposed to stand as he did without a rival in their affections.

They then came forward by solemn declaration to re-assert those principles at the foot of the throne; to vindicate them from all possible misconception or misrepresentation; they approached by the ways of the constitution, without asserting a claim of their own, or presuming to dictate to the authority of parliament. "They desired a further repeal of the laws affecting them; they expressed gratitude for past favors, confiding in their liberality and benevo-

“ lence, that future favors would be as extensive as the general welfare of the state should admit.”

With such a testimony, he addressed them in favor of the Roman Catholics; with a declaration of that import in his hand, subscribed by an host, as to national authority; persons of high distinction, ancient family, great character, enlightened education, ample fortune, and extensive influence in the country; men of general intercourse and knowledge, political, professional, mercantile; men too, who themselves and their ancestors, had made ample sacrifices to a sanctimonious observance of their vows. Without affecting or entertaining any disrespect for any other orders or classes of the people, it seemed from such persons that national opinion and professional principles were best collected; not from a few deluded people in the south; not from a few dissatisfied people in the north; nor yet from any strange and incongruous connection that might be fabricated between both: nay, if by some wonderful rotation these two extremities should ever happen to meet; if by some monstrous convulsion, the two poles, far as they were asunder, should be brought into conjunction, they would not have force to disturb the happy and temperate regions placed between, where the people enjoyed equal days and indulgent heavens.

It was under such a conviction that he addressed them with confidence for a further repeal of the laws affecting the Roman Catholics, to that extent which their wisdom and liberality should lead them to think expedient. What that extent should be, was to him the only question that could divide the opinion of parliament on that subject.

As for himself, balanced between confidence in the Catholics, and devotion to ancient establishments, he had not found it easy to accommodate between the two contending propensities.

1st. He would give them the practice and profession of the law, as a reasonable provision, and application of their talents to their own country.

2dly. He would restore to them education, entire and unrestrained, because a state of ignorance was a state of barbarity. That would be accomplished by taking off the necessity for a licence as enjoined by the act of 1782.

3dly. He would draw closer the bonds of intercourse and affection, by allowing intermarriage, repealing that cruel statute that served to betray female credulity, and bastardize the children of a virtuous mother.

4thly.

4thly. He would remove those obstructions to arts and manufactures, that limited the number of apprentices, which were so necessary to assist and promote trade. He then moved, "That leave be given to bring in a bill for removing certain restraints and disabilities under which his majesty's Roman Catholic subjects labour, from statutes at present in force."

The Right Honorable Mr. Hobart seconded the motion, without making any observation.

Mr. Cuffe (now Lord Tyrawley), thought that gentlemen would do well to state their opinion of the conduct of the Catholics. Those, headed by a nobleman, who was distinguished for his liberality and extended property, who had signed the declaration alluded to by the right honorable baronet, deserved every kindness in the power of the legislature to bestow. They were good citizens, loyal subjects. They had told them they would be grateful for any indulgence; and that they would not pretend to point out the extent of the relief, which, in their wisdom, they might think proper to bestow. Surely, in those circumstances, they could not refuse them some indulgence. But there were Roman Catholics who had conducted themselves in a very different manner: they had established a court of delegates in the capital; and they had appointed local committees in the several counties: they had entered into associations with the discontented and the turbulent of all religions. And relying, upon their power, they presumed to dictate to the legislature what they would have. That system seemed to have been adopted in order to terrify parliament.

Several gentlemen spoke on the opposite side of the question; when at last Mr. Hobart said, it was not his intention to debate the question. He should not have risen, were it not for the suggestion of Mr. Cuffe. He therefore declared, that if any attack should be made on the establishments in church and state, it was the fixed determination of government to support them; and any attempt of that nature, either by force or intimidation, would be found to meet the decided opposition of the government of both countries.

Leave was then given to bring in the bill, and a committee appointed to prepare the same, without a dissenting voice.

No sooner had this leave been given, than Mr. O'Hara suddenly rose, and said: he agreed with most of the gentlemen who had expressed their sentiments respecting the giving some further relief to the Roman Catholics, and very heartily concurred with the house in the leave given to bring in a bill for

that purpose. But that in order to have the subject fully before the house, it might be wished that the house knew exactly the particulars in which the Roman Catholics desired relief: first, because parliament might otherwise unintentionally omit matter, which might appear essentially necessary to the Catholics, however unimportant it might appear to parliament, and so fail of giving satisfaction; but more particularly because, if the relief desired by the Roman Catholics were ascertained, the house might then draw the line definitively, and say, "we will meet your wishes thus far, but never can go further."

He said, he had thought in the year 1782, that every thing was then done, which was necessary to relieve the conscience, or essential to the happiness of the Roman Catholics; and he was sure such was the intention of parliament; but the house then proceeded without knowing from the Roman Catholics what the particulars were, in which they desired relief. By which means the greater opening was left to desire further relief in the present instance. But if they then were in possession of a statement of their wishes made by themselves, they might easily draw the line by the new act of parliament so strongly, as to preclude any expectation of change, at least, for many years to come.

Those considerations (he said), had been strong inducements with him to listen to the desire of a very particular friend of his, to lay such a statement before the house. A friend who was not of the Roman Catholic persuasion; but one to whom he would not willingly refuse any thing he could ask, had desired him to present such a statement as a personal favor. Though he did not know the petitioners, he knew the integrity of his friend, who told him they were altogether worth upwards of a million, which he mentioned to shew that they were considerable individuals, whose sentiments might be supposed to coincide with the greater part at least of the Roman Catholics.

However, though he presented the petition, he requested not to be considered as its particular patron; for he had agreed to present it upon the terms only of reserving to himself the full liberty of discussing every part of it, and condemning or approving as he might think proper. If there were any thing exceptionable in the petition, it was not his; if more were desired by it than were reasonable or consistent with the establishments in church or state, he would decidedly vote against such parts.

Under these circumstances, he ventured to offer the petition to the house; and the rather, because to petition parliament was a matter of right in the subject;

ject; so much so, that a member could hardly refuse to present a petition if required by no improper description of men; but more particularly, because the petition brought information before the house, which might be useful in framing the bill; that the petitioners, after stating the particulars, in which they hoped for relief, promised to acquiesce in whatever relief parliament might think proper to give them.*

The Solicitor General said the petition, in its present state of abandonment, could be no object of notice: he therefore moved the question of adjournment. Mr. D. Brown was for receiving the petition. However, Mr. O'Hara withdrew the petition for the present, because he could not say he had seen the petitioners sign it: but that he should present it another day; and that he thought the house ought to be glad to know what relief was prayed, in order that it might give satisfaction so far as was consistent with their civil and religious establishments.

Mr. Grattan said, that he should be very sorry that any man should depart possessed with an idea that the house had refused to receive the Catholic petition, or committed an act so atrocious and unconstitutional; but an informality attending the manner of presenting it had induced the member himself to postpone the business to another day. He concurred with the mover of the bill in every thing he had said in favour of the Catholic body; it was therefore, that he could not agree with other gentlemen, who talked of their evil inclinations and seditious publications. He knew of none such that could be charged to the Roman Catholics; nor could he see how gentlemen could assent to a bill which supposed the merits of Catholics, and insinuations that bespoke the contrary: what you give (said he) to the Roman Catholics, give it liberally: what you refuse, refuse decently: whatever you do, do it with discretion: whatever you say, let it be the language of decency and good manners.

Mr. G. Ponsonby held it to be the undoubted right of the constituent to

* Whilst Mr. Sheridan was observing that it was a very odd way of introducing a petition, to state that it came not from any particular body of men, but from an intimate acquaintance, Mr. Burke, the gentleman alluded to by Mr. O'Hara, having incautiously ventured into the body of the house behind the speaker's chair, to speak with Mr. O'Hara, there arose a general cry of "into custody!" He however withdrew time enough to avoid it.

petition parliament in a legal and respectful manner, but only in that manner; on that subject he was remarkably attentive to rule and form, and objected on that account to the reception of the petition, as it contravened every one of the established forms.

The 4th of February, 1792, was a day of importance to the Catholic cause: the general committee anxious to act in full concert with Sir Hercules Langrishe, as he was well known to act with the privity and approbation of government, had a special meeting, at which they entered into some* unanimous

“ *Dublin, February 4th, 1792.*

* “ GENERAL COMMITTEE OF ROMAN CATHOLICS.

“ EDWARD BYRNE, Esq. in the Chair.

“ *Resolved*, That this committee has been informed, that reports have been circulated, that the application of the Catholics for relief, extends to unlimited and total emancipation; and that attempts have been made, wickedly and falsely, to instil into the minds of the Protestants of this kingdom an opinion, that our applications were preferred in a tone of menace.

“ *Resolved*, That several Protestant gentlemen have expressed great satisfaction on being individually informed of the real extent and respectful manner of the applications for relief, have assured us, that nothing could have excited jealousy, or apparent opposition to us, from our Protestant countrymen, but the above-mentioned misapprehensions.

“ *Resolved*, That we therefore deem it necessary to declare, that the whole of our late applications, whether to his majesty's ministers, to men in power, or to private members of the legislature: as well as our intended petition, neither did, nor does contain any thing, or extend further, either in substance or in principle, than the four following objects.

“ 1st. Admission to the profession and practice of the law.

“ 2d. Capacity to serve in county magistracies.

“ 3d. A right to be summoned, and to serve on grand and petty juries.

“ 4th. The right of voting in counties only for Protestant members of parliament; in such a manner, however, as that a Roman Catholic freeholder should not vote, unless he either rented, and cultivated a farm of twenty pounds per annum, in addition to his forty shillings freehold; or else possessed a freehold to the amount of twenty pounds a year.

“ *Resolved*, That in our opinion, these applications, not extending to any other objects than the above, are moderate, and absolutely necessary for our general alleviation, and more particularly for the protection of the Catholic farmers and the peasantry of Ireland; and that they do not in any degree, endanger either church or state, or endanger the security of the Protestant interest.

“ *Resolved*, That we never had an idea or thought so extravagant, as that of menacing or intimidating our Protestant brethren, much less the legislature; and that we disclaim the violent and turbulent intentions imputed to us in some of the public prints, and circulated in private conversation.

“ *Resolved*, That we refer to the known disposition of the Roman Catholics of this kingdom, to
“ our

mous resolutions, calculated to counteract the effects of the misrepresentations and calumnies of their enemies.

On the same day, Sir Hercules Langrishe,* in a short speech, introduced his bill for the relief of the Roman Catholics: it was read for the first time. Sir Hercules said, it was a matter of so much importance, that lest its objects should be misconceived, he thought it necessary that it should be printed, and that a sufficient time should be given to have it fully understood; he trusted, when understood, it would be approved of by every man in the nation. Sir Hercules then moved, that the bill should be read on that day se'nnight. Mr. Staples objected to the shortness of the time, and called upon the secretary, who had seconded the motion for the bill, to inform the house, whether the concessions, which the bill contained, were sufficient to satisfy the Catholics; or whether these concessions were all that he intended to grant them. He wished to know the *ne plus ultra*.

Hon. Denis Brown said, the righthonorable gentleman would find it difficult to answer for the future expectations of three millions of people. The Catholics offered, as a security for their attachment to the constitution, the approved loyalty of long and disturbed times. He knew it would be impossible at any time to combat bigotry, prejudice, and love of power, by argument; but that it would be impossible for any exertion of human ingenuity or sophistry, to support the absurd principle of keeping a numerous and deserving description of our fellow-subjects, in the degraded situation they then stood.

Sir Hercules Langrishe said, it would have been impossible for him to answer the gentleman, had not the declaration of an host of Roman Catholics already answered him in the public papers. That "grateful for what had already been granted, they would with joy and humility receive whatever the wisdom and liberality of parliament thought proper to bestow." As to the obscure and contemptible persons, whose names filled the columns of newspapers, declaring a contrary sentiment, he had no regard to them, while his

"our dutiful behaviour, during a long series of years, and particularly to the whole tenor of our late proceedings for the full refutation of every charge of sedition and disloyalty.

"*Resolved*, That for the more ample and detailed exposure of all the evil reports and calumnies circulated against us, an address to our Protestant fellow-subjects, and to the public in general, be printed by the order, and in the name of the general committee.

"Signed by order,

"RICHARD M'CORMICK, Secretary."

* 12 Parl. Debates, p. 52.

opinion was supported by the wife, the good, and the respectable. Hereupon Mr. Secretary Hobart observed, he would not have the presumption to answer for so great a body as the Roman Catholics; their good conduct for a series of years past, was at once the best proof of their wishes and their deserts. As to the question, whether this were to be the *ne plus ultra*, he would only say, that the house would never find him disposed to take any part without their full concurrence. The bill was ordered to be printed, and to be read a second time on that day se'nnight.

On the 8th of the month, Mr. John O'Neil presented a petition, which he said had been put into his hands by a very respectable body of men at Belfast; it was signed by more than six hundred, many of whom he knew personally to be persons of great reputation: the object of the petition was, that the legislature would please to repeal all penal and restrictive laws against Catholics, and put them on the same footing with their Protestant fellow subjects.

Sir Henry Cavendish requested the right honorable gentleman to read the petition throughout. He trusted it was not in any wise similar to a petition brought into the house a few nights ago (by Mr. O'Hara), if it were, he was sure it must be unknown to the right honorable gentleman who moved for its being received; as the right honorable gentleman valued too highly his own dignity, and the dignity of parliament to present such a petition.

Mr. O'Neil read the petition throughout; it began with lamenting the degraded state of the Catholics, and requested that they might have redress as above stated.

The Hon. Denis Browne seconded the motion for receiving the petition.

Sir Hercules Langrishe very strongly and at large expressed his astonishment at the novelty and singularity of the union of the Dissenters with the Catholics, He would not object against the reception of a petition from so respectable a member of that house: but he had seen some treasonable productions from gentlemen of that town. Sir Boyle Roche bitterly inveighed against the Dissenters, and actually opposed his single negative against the reception of the petition.*

The 11th of February was the day, to which the Catholic bill stood committed: but before the order of the day was called on, Mr. Stewart, (of Tyrone) after an able and appropriate speech, moved that "an humble address

“ should be presented to his majesty, beseeching his majesty to take into his
 “ consideration the situation of the Presbyterian ministers of the province of
 “ Ulster, and to make such further provision for them, as in his wisdom and
 “ bounty he shall think fit; and that this house will make good the same.”

Mr. George Ponsonby seconded the motion.

Sir Edward Newenham expressed his warm regard for, and bore testimony to the loyalty and virtues of the Protestant Dissenters; that they had always been steady friends to the house of Hanover: that as parliament was going to grant favors to the Roman Catholics, they could not refuse justice to the Presbyterian clergy: their principles and conduct merited every favor from a Protestant government; and he rose to give his most hearty concurrence to the measure. There certainly were no subjects more loyal or more dutiful than those, in whose favor the honorable gentleman had spoken, and he therefore most heartily coincided in his intention.

The great body of the Catholics was little satisfied with the concessions contained in the bill of Sir H. Langrishe: whether the form of it lately circulated were or were not according to the original ideas of the framer of it, was not so certain, as the conviction of most of the Catholics, who took an active share in the business, that this bill had been substituted for another, which probably would have been obtained, but for the arts of some designing and the credulity of some honest men. Whilst however the bill was in progress through the house, the great body of the Catholics acting through their committee, prepared a petition to parliament immediately calculated to meet the objections made against their proceeding, on a principle of indecent menace and intimidation, and wishing to abett their cause by reasoning and conduct of a most unconstitutional tendency. Accordingly on the * 18th of February, Mr. Egan presented a petition signed by fifty of the most respectable Catholic commercial characters in Dublin, on behalf of themselves and their

* On the same day Mr. John O'Neil said, he held in his hand a petition, which he received by the post of that morning, and was instructed to present to the house; it was signed by the names of 350 Protestant inhabitants, the gentlemen, clergy, and freeholders of the four lower baronies of the county of Antrim; and would, he was assured, have been signed by a thousand, had it not been for the shortness of time, since they understood the Roman Catholic bill was to have been debated on that day.

In the petition they stated, they would feel themselves happy, that the Roman Catholics should receive every liberal immunity consistent with the spirit of our glorious constitution, and with the safety and interest of the protestant religion. The petition was received, and ordered to lie on the table.

brethren throughout the kingdom.* In presenting the petition he considered himself merely complying with his duty. He did not consider himself bounden to support its principle, nor to give any particular vote on the subject, which was to come forward that night, considering it criminal to come predetermined on a question of so much import. He then read the petition and the names of those who had signed it (which were those of the Catholic committee) and he trusted the house would receive the petition and decide upon it with liberality. After some harsh observations of Mr. Ogle, and resented by Mr. Browne, the petition was ordered to lie on the table. On the order of the day for the house resolving itself into a committee on the Catholic bill the general question was warmly debated. All cautiously restrained their ideas of indulgence to the points of the bill: and many of them took that opportunity of pledging themselves never to grant the elective franchise as a concession incompatible with the Protestant ascendancy. Mr. Ogle almost alone opposed the bill's going to a committee. † Mr. Grattan had been instructed

* 12 Par. Deb. p. 125.

“ To the Right Hon. the Knights, Citizens, and Burgeſſes, in Parliament aſſembled.

“ The Petition of the underſigned Roman Catholics, on behalf of themſelves and the Roman Catholics of Ireland.

“ HUMBL Y SHEWETH,

“ THAT as the houſe has thought it expedient to direct their attention to the ſituation of the
 “ Roman Catholics of Ireland, and to a further relaxation of the penal ſtatutes ſtill ſubſiſting againſt
 “ them, they beg leave, with all humility, to come before the houſe with the moſt heartfelt
 “ aſſurance of the wiſdom and juſtice of parliament, which is at all times deſirous moſt graciously
 “ to attend to the petitions of the people; they therefore humbly preſume to ſubmit to the houſe
 “ their intreaty, that they ſhould take into their conſideration whether the removal of ſome of the
 “ civil incapacities, under which they labour, and the reſtoration of the petitioners to ſome ſhare in
 “ the elective franchise, which they enjoyed long after the revolution, will not tend to ſtrengthen
 “ the Proteſtant ſtate, add new vigour to induſtry, and afford protection and happineſs to the
 “ Catholics of Ireland; that the petitioners refer with confidence to their conduct for a century paſt,
 “ to prove their uniform loyalty and ſubmiſſion to the laws, and to corroborate their ſolemn declaration,
 “ that if they obtain from the juſtice and benignity of parliament, ſuch relaxation from
 “ certain incapacities, and a participation in that franchise, which will raiſe them to the rank of
 “ freemen, their gratitude muſt be proportioned to the benefit, and that enjoying ſome ſhare in the
 “ happy conſtitution of Ireland, they will exert themſelves with additional zeal in its conſervation.”

† 12 Par. Deb. Mr. Grattan on this occaſion thus alluded to a fœderal union of the two kingdoms.

There is another danger, to which or to the fear of which your diviſions may expoſe the Proteſtant aſcendancy, I mean an union; let me ſuppoſe the miniſter, as he has often propoſed corrupt terms

fructed so to do by a part of his constituents, the corporation of Dublin, but could not sacrifice the rights and interests of three millions to the caprice or prejudice of some individuals. The house resolved itself into a committee on the bill after midnight, and at the suggestion of Mr. Ogle, Mr. Secretary Hobart declared he wished not to precipitate matters and had no objection to the chairman's reporting progress, which was accordingly done, and leave was given to sit again on the Monday following, which was the 20th of February. On that day Mr. David La Touche moved, that the petition of the Roman Catholic committee presented to the house on the preceding Saturday should be read by the clerk: it was read, and he then moved, that it should be rejected. The motion was seconded by Mr. Ogle. The greater part of the house was very violent for the rejection of the petition. Some few, who were against the prayer of the petition, objected to the harsh measure of rejection. Several of the opposition members supported Mr. La Touche's motion. Even Mr. G. Ponsonby, on this occasion, voted against his friend Mr. Grattan. The solicitor general attempted to soften the refusal to the Catholics by moving, that the prayer of the petition, as far as it related to a participation of the elective franchise should not then be complied with. The attorney general and some other staunch supporters of government had spoken similar language, that they hoped quickly to see all religious distinctions and restrictions done away, but that the fulness of time was not yet come. Mr. Forbes, the Hon. F. Hutchinson, Col. (now Lord) Hutchinson, Mr. Smith, Mr. Hardy, and Mr. Grattan spoke strongly against the motion and in favor of admitting

terms to the Protestant, should propose crafty ones to the Catholic, and should say, you are three-fourths of the people, excluded from the blessings of an Irish constitution; accept the advantages of an English union. Here is a proposal probably supported by the people of England, and rendered plausible to at least three-fourths of the people of Ireland: I mention an union, because I have heard it has been darkly suggested as the resort of Protestant desperation against Catholic pretensions; never think of it, the Protestant would be the first victim. There would be Catholic equality and parliamentary extinction. It would be fatal to the Catholic also; he would not be raised, but you would be depressed, and his chance of liberty blasted for ever; it would be fatal to England, beginning with a false compromise, which they might call an union, to end in eternal separation, through the progress of two civil wars. Mr. Sheridan referred the following words to the subject of union, "he should see in perspective (a paradox in expression but a certainty in event) an union "produced by dissention." Sir John Parnell warned his countrymen not to suppose, that the refusal of the Catholic claims would hand over to them an union or a civil war: either of which must end in blood and bring destruction upon the country. Ibid p. 180. Such then were the general ideas of union with this country.

the Catholics to a share in the elective franchise. Much virulent abuse was heaped upon that part of the body of Roman Catholics, which was supposed to be represented by the Catholic committee. At a very late hour the house divided, 208 for rejecting the petition, and 23 only against it. Then Mr. La Touche moved, that the petition from the society of the united Irishmen of Belfast, should be also rejected: and the question being put was carried with two or three negatives.

The bill went rather quietly through the committee: and on the third reading Sir H. Langrishe congratulated the country on the spirit of liberality that had attended the bill in its progress, and finally brought it to so desirable a conclusion.

It was a new covenant, a new charter of amity and intercourse amongst them; and he felt a pride in observing, that what they had granted to their Catholic brethren they had granted with cordiality and good will, with a confident heart, an unreluctant hand, and an unanimous voice. Whilst their constitutional pride justly resented the rashness of a few, their justice distinguished the meritorious conduct of the many; and in the intemperance of the moment they did not forget the unimpeachable demeanour of an hundred years.

The most powerful adversaries, they, who had laboured with sincerity and solicitude to serve them, had to encounter, were the rash and mischievous publications, which affected to plead their cause. And were it not for the wise and timely interposition of the great and respectable body of the Roman Catholics, to whom he had often alluded, and of whom every gentleman had spoken in terms of the highest respect, they could neither have been justified in their undertaking, nor successful in their conclusion.

The state of parties in the House of Commons was much the same that it had been in the two preceding sessions. Mr. G. Ponsonby after a very elaborate argument, moved for leave to bring in a bill to repeal every law, which prohibited a trade from Ireland with the counties lying eastward of the Cape of Good Hope: which was lost by a majority of 156 against 70.* At the close of this debate, Mr. G. Ponsonby renewed his profession, that although he should lose his motion, yet he never would vote with any administration, until that and the other measures, to which he and the other gentlemen with whom he acted were pledged, should be obtained. In conformity with this

* 12 Par. Deb. p. 112.

principle Mr. Forbes brought forward on the same day his pension and place bill, * but they were both put off without a division, though not without debate, to a distant day.

Exclusive of the Catholic question the debate, which during the session of 1792, was the most interesting, and the most heated arose out of Mr. Browne's motion to bring in a bill to repeal an act of the last session for weighing butter, hydes and tallow, and for appointing a weigh-master for the city of Cork.† After prefacing his motion by animadverting on the conduct of administration in pursuing that dangerous and unconstitutional system, which they had laid down and strictly adhered to, of creating influence, he particularly adverted to the appointment made by government to the office of weigh-master of Cork, which had been divided into three parts, and bestowed on members of parliament, for the purpose of creating parliamentary influence. This office, had been long enjoyed by the corporation of Cork, and they had been unjustly deprived of it for the purpose of the present administration's obtaining an undue parliamentary influence.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer opposed the motion, on the ground of its being an insult on the crown.

Colonel Hutchinson voted for the introduction of the bill; last session he had opposed the enacting of the present law as strenuously, as he was able, and should have moved for its repeal now, were he not hopeless of success: he had claimed that office then, for the corporation of Cork, and he never should cease to claim it, as long as he had a seat within those walls. The corporation of Cork had a common law right to that office; in equity, and in reason, they had an irresistible claim; why should they be an exception to a general rule?

Mr. George Ponsonby reprobated the conduct of administration in obtaining influence. In the present instance they split the office into three, and it was bestowed on members of parliament. He observed, that before this grant, administration had already one hundred and ten placemen and pensioners, and that was sufficient to carry any measure they might want without creating

* 15 Com. Journ. p. 87. The pension bill was ever most obnoxious to government. Every possessor and expectant was loud in reprobating it: and now more than ever the motives for supporting it were attributed to factious democracy, by endeavouring to clip the wings of royalty and prerogative.

† 12 Par. Deb. p. 270.

the additional influence ; but the carrying on of those measures, which they adopted and the using instruments by which the ministers of those were governing that country, was a system which, if not resisted, must in the end overthrow the constitution. He contrasted the conduct of the House of Commons of England, with the conduct of the House of Commons of Ireland ; in England there was a place bill, and a pension bill, and there the servants of the crown were responsible for their conduct ; but he asked, how had it been in the House of Commons in Ireland ? A place bill had been proposed, it had been rejected, and the minister had multiplied places ; a pension bill had been proposed, it had been rejected, and the minister granted additional pensions ; a responsibility bill had been proposed, it had been rejected, and the minister of the crown lavished away the public money.

He stated that the gross revenue of the country amounted to about one million six hundred thousand pounds, and one-eighth of that was divided amongst members of parliament. He protested, that he did not speak as a party man. If he spoke not truth, might God, to whom he should one day answer, punish him. An hour would come, when the country would endure any extremity, rather than endure the system of influence that had been established.

Mr. Moore made some personal observations upon Mr. Ponsonby's fondness for power, and impatience at its residing in any hands but his own : to which Mr. George Ponsonby replied with considerable warmth, that in a former parliament there had occurred an event singular and unfortunate ; the incapacity of his majesty personally to exercise the functions of the crown. The House of Commons of that day did appear in direct opposition to the lord lieutenant : the existing government was beat by a majority of 54 ; but it pleased God to restore his majesty's health, and in exact proportion as his majesty recovered, that majority had diminished. While the ministry was incapable of controuling the members of that house, their language was becoming the representatives of the people ; they maintained the independency of the Irish crown, and of the Irish parliament, in defiance of a lord lieutenant and his secretary ; but when the languid powers of that lord lieutenant were renovated by the aid of an English minister, they courted and thanked the very lord lieutenant they had censured and defied. At the time of his majesty's recovery, ministers did intimate to the members of that house, that if they presumed to vote against the will of the lord lieutenant,

tenant, they should lose their places; and he well remembered, that as the authority of ministers received strength, the virtue of that house became weak; so that those who formerly stood up to oppose, and to censure the lord lieutenant, were then the foremost to adulate and to thank him. Was it possible there could be a more humiliating conduct?

He was one of the persons dismissed from office at that time. He did receive a message from Lord Buckingham, by the attorney-general (Earl Clare) in which he was told, "that if he would consent to support Lord Buckingham's administration, he would not only hold any office, but receive any favor government had it in their power to bestow." His answer was, "that he was ready at all times to serve the king's government, but his own consistency never would permit him to support a lord lieutenant, on whose conduct he had voted a parliamentary censure." Let that be contradicted; and if other gentlemen thought the interests of the country were better supported by meanly fawning on a lord lieutenant, than by a manly discharge of duty, let them pursue that mode. He never would.*

Upon

* On a subsequent day Mr. George Ponsonby was called upon to make some apology for the liberty taken with the chancellor. That lord had complained, that he had divulged the confidential secrets of his best benefactor in life. To which Mr. George Ponsonby replied, that if some expressions had been conceived to be hurtful to the feelings of the noble lord, that must have been from an idea of what did not pass; he had not stated the whole in debate, but every one knew the events, which took place at that remarkable period; and that after certain events an overture had been made by the existing government to the gentlemen, who had gone into opposition to afford them support, to return or to remain with them, call it which they might, and that all previous proceedings should be buried in perfect oblivion. In stating the transaction, he did not allude to any person treating with himself as one, but to many besides him, to his connexions, and not with him only his right honorable relation behind him (Mr. W. B. Ponsonby). The proposition was, that there should be a perfect amnesty, as it was called, a cessation of all hostilities, and that all persons were to be considered, as if no such matter had taken place. The noble lord, then attorney general, reasoned with him, not as a servant of the crown, but as a private friend upon his conduct. He represented to him how foolish it was to throw away a lucrative place; that the occasion did not call for such an act, and that it was unwise in him to act in such a manner; that if he went into opposition, he would not only lose his place, but the promotion also in the line of his profession, which his situation in the country must secure. He considered the affair as by no means confidential. The noble lord was then attorney general, and in certain instances might be directed by government. How could it be called confidential? There never was a more public political negotiation in Great Britain or that country. He believed every man in Dublin knew of it. In a room not far from them, there were fifty or sixty persons engaged in debating upon it. Though he pretended to superiority over

no

Upon Lord Buckingham's reassumption of the government, he erected fourteen new parliamentary places; could any man shut his eyes against that? No.

Ever

no man, he contended with equality with any man. He was in a situation above receiving charitable donations which the language implied. And therefore if the noble lord had ever said, that he was the best benefactor of his life, he must have lessened the force of any obligations which he may have conferred. He thought with Prior :

“ To John I owed great obligation ;

“ But he to pay himself, thought fit

“ To publish it to all the nation ;

“ Sure John and I are more than quit !”

It had been understood, that he had said that the noble lord wanted him to sign a paper. He did not. He never went into detail. He only related that government wanted a written answer. He believed that the noble lord was as incapable of offering as he was of complying with such a request. It was told to his right honorable friend and to himself, that a written answer upon the occasion was necessary, in order to be transmitted to the British cabinet, that they might see upon what ground the government of Ireland stood. He held a letter in his hand from Lord St. Helens, (then Secretary Fitzherbert) on the subject.

The transaction he conceived to be as public as could be, as an amnesty was held out to every one who would come in under it. He hoped he had said every thing satisfactory to the noble lord and his friends, and entirely acquitted his lordship of having made any direct nomination of him to any office. He was sorry to state any thing further on the transaction, but it was necessary to shew, that written answers were expected. For after the answer which terminated the negotiation, he was dismissed. It was one of the first acts of the right honorable gentleman opposite him, (Mr. Hobart) and he admitted, that he did it in terms of great personal civility. He did not blame government for dismissing him. He would do the same if he were in government to those, who refused their support. That he assured gentlemen, that his enmities of this nature never went beyond the door of the House of Commons. He appealed to his honorable friend (Mr. M. Beresford) who filled his office, whether he had ever looked at him with envy on that account? To shew that a written answer was given, he read the following copy of that given by his relation (the Right Honorable W. B. Ponsonby) for himself, and friends.

“ I intend to support the usual supplies and his majesty's government in this country. But I will not enter into any communication with Lord Buckingham. And as some mistakes have hitherto taken place from verbal conversation, this is the reason for giving a written answer.”

Mr. Secretary Hobart acknowledged, that from his esteem for a noble lord, he had felt great pain on a former night. At such a distance of time it was natural that some little inaccuracies might occur. He requested him to recollect, whether that report of the statement, which represented the servants of the crown insisting upon him to sign a paper for the purpose of transmitting it to the British cabinet were strictly true?

Mr. George Ponsonby explained, that he had been requested to give an answer in writing, not to sign any instrument of association.

Mr.

Ever since the same measures had been pursued, every thing had been bestowed on members of parliament: were there no other men in the country fit for office?

How differently did people feel in England? How little did they imagine the power of influence in Ireland? No sooner was it known that Lord Buckingham had quarrelled with the parliament of Ireland, than Lord Westmoreland was named his successor. It was thought impossible for Lord Buckingham to remain an hour, but he demonstrated the force of influence for some months, and consequently Lord Westmoreland did not come as soon as the English cabinet had imagined it would have been necessary to send him. Their error arose from supposing it impossible for an Irish parliament to have the meanness to praise and address the man they had just censured.

He had heard a great deal about the prosperity of that country. No man denied that the country was prosperous; the people of that country enjoyed pretty nearly perfect civil freedom, and pretty nearly perfect personal freedom. (Though it had not been long since he shewed to that house, that a judge had grossly violated the latter, and they refused to censure him.) The possession of civil and personal freedom promoted industry, and by industry a country grew rich; but what was that to government? The people of a country might possess civil liberty, and personal liberty, and yet be very badly governed, because they might not have political freedom.

He recollected upon former occasions it had been said, that the people were not discontented; but the gentlemen on that side of the house were discontented. But their conduct had been the reverse of men who would wish to embarrass government. What necessary measure had they opposed? Where had they shewn the temper of discontented men? He then concluded with moving, "that it was the opinion of that house, that his majesty's ministers
" were endeavouring to establish a system of corrupt influence in that house,
" incompatible with the principles of the constitution, and the independence
" of parliament."

Mr. W. B. Ponsonby rose to say, that he had received from Mr. Fitzherbert a letter, in which it was proposed that gentlemen, who had voted against administration on the question of the regency, and past censure might, if they chose, come in under an amnesty, and every thing was to be perfectly obliterated; this letter, however, required a written answer, in order to be transmitted to his majesty's ministers in England, to ascertain them how administration was to be supported in Ireland.

The motion was seconded by Mr. Grattan, and negatived without a division, at a quarter past two o'clock in the morning.

On the 14th of March, Mr. Grattan made one more attack on the police bill; but upon a division for adjournment in a very thin house, there appeared for the adjournment 53, against it 24. On the next day when the money bills were carried up to the lords, the speaker made the following speech to the lord lieutenant.

* "MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,

"THE Commons of Ireland attend with the supplies. While they may look back with a conscious pride to their spirited and successful measures for preventing an encrease of the national debt, as one great cause of the extension of trade, agriculture and manufactures, which has with a rapid and uninterrupted progress raised this kingdom to a state of prosperity and wealth never before experienced in it; they know that the continuance of that prosperity would soon cease, if it were not cherished and maintained by our most excellent constitution, in which liberty and order are so happily blended, that every subject equally enjoys their influence, and feels his person, his industry and property, equally effectually protected by it.

"Its preservation, therefore, must ever be the great object of their care, and there is no principle on which it is founded so essential to its preservation, nor more justly dear to their patriotic and loyal feelings, than that which has settled the throne of these realms on his majesty's illustrious house; on it, and on the provisions for securing a Protestant parliament, depends the Protestant ascendancy, and with it the continuance of the many blessings we now enjoy.

"The bills which I hold contain the usual grants, and I have the most sincere happiness in presenting them to your excellency, whose knowledge of the true interests of Ireland, and whose anxiety to promote its welfare, has been proved to us by the firmest vigilance, and prudence of your administration."

When the speaker, with the members, had returned to the house, Mr. Secretary Hobart moved the thanks of the house to the speaker, for his speech at the bar of the House of Lords, and said, if he were capable ade-

quately to express his feelings with regard to the right honorable person in question, or did he believe he had ability to convey the sentiments of the house, he would expatiate fully on the subject; but as he feared he could not do justice to his merit, he should content himself with saying, that if ever that chair were filled by a person, whose talents and integrity, whose public and private character could do honor to so elevated a station, it was then so filled.

After an adjournment for about one month the Parliament was prorogued on the 18th of April; on which day his Excellency, in his speech from the throne, assured both houses of Parliament, "that he had his Majesty's commands to express his approbation of the wisdom that had guided their proceedings during the present session, especially in the liberal indulgencies they had afforded to their Roman Catholic brethren, by establishing the legality of intermarriage, by admitting them to the profession of the law, and the benefits of education, and by removing all restrictions upon their industry in trade and manufactures.

It appears from the studied allusions to the Protestant ascendancy, which in the speech of the Speaker were evidently aimed against the petition of the Catholics for a participation in the elective franchise, that Mr. Foster wished to raise a strong and general opposition to that measure throughout the country: but the speech of the Lord Lieutenant imported, that the Government, moving by the impulse of the British councils, was disposed rather to extend than contract the indulgences to the Roman Catholics. His Majesty approved of their wisdom in the liberal indulgences that had been granted, but suggested no danger to the Protestant ascendancy, nor recommendation to check their liberality. Umbrage indeed had been taken, during the debate on the Catholic question, by some members, at the idea of its introduction under the sanction of the British minister.*

The

* On the presentation of the Catholic Petition by Mr. Egan, Mr. Staples said, he thought the bill was introduced under a mandate of a British minister, and as such supported by administration here, rather than as a measure, in which the sense of Parliament or the Protestant interests were consulted. He wished to know if any farther concession to Roman Catholics were intended, or if any line were to be drawn, in order to mark out the ultimate boundary of such measures; and he signified his wish of moving some strong declaratory clause in the preamble of the bill on this head: to which Mr. Secretary Hobart answered, that he knew of no concessions intended to Roman Ca-

The great object of the political views of Ireland both in and out of Parliament, during the whole year of 1792, was Catholic emancipation, as it was improperly called. The question had produced unprecedented divisions and subdivisions of parties throughout the kingdom. The few of the leading Protestants, who wished the Irish to become a people, and to enjoy the freedom of the British constitution, opposed the bulk of their fellow Protestants, who, under the specious cry of *Protestant ascendancy*, were determined to defend their possessions of that monopoly of civil power, which the abuse of centuries had vested in them. The Dissenters, who in Ireland are certainly as numerous as the Protestants of the Establishment, had deeply imbibed the axiom of Mr. Grattan, *that the Irish Protestant should never be free, until the Irish Catholic should cease to be a slave*: they consequently urged the Catholics to unite with them in emancipating their country; and some of the Catholics for a time gave enthusiastically into that co-operation. A very respectable, though not the most numerous, part of the Catholic body was divided against the rest of their brethren, from their disapprobation of the principles, means, and support, upon which the latter appeared to rest the common hopes of success. Great, however, was their address in securing, through their agent, the countenance and support of the father (Mr. Burke), whose influence upon the British Cabinet was now generally felt and universally admitted. The disgrace and obloquy attempted to be thrown upon the Catholic Committee, served to deepen their reflection upon their situation, and to stimulate their

tholics but what were mentioned in the bill proposed by his Right Hon. Friend, and to those, so far as he could collect, the general sense of the House was favourable; but with respect to the measure of drawing any line for the future conduct of Parliament on this topic, it was a measure he would never presume to attempt. With respect to mandates of a British minister on the subject, he knew of none.

Mr. Staples feared it was a measure of absolute command from a British minister, and therefore hoped the spirit of the House would resist it.

Sir Thomas Osborne remarked, that the bill, being brought forward by the advice of that most able minister, should have his assent.

Mr. Sheridan should not have spoken on the subject, if an answer had been given to the question put by his Hon. Friend, and if an Hon. Baronet had not said, "the bill had his approbation, because introduced under the direction of the British minister," whom he was pleased to stile "most able."

Sir Thomas Osbourne, did not say direction, but advice. To which Mr. Sheridan replied, that, if he were compiling a dictionary, he should explain "advice of a minister," by the single word command.

exertions

exertions to emerge out of it. The alarm, reluctance, and tenacity of the Protestant gave energy, confidence, and perseverance to the Catholic.

Previous, therefore, to any further application, the Committee, following the example of their brethren in England, which had been attended with such conciliating effects, and in pursuance of the advice of many of their best friends and ablest supporters, resolved to give to the legislature and their country the most ample satisfaction in their power, on all topics of their faith, which were, however remotely, connected with the principles of good order and government. For this purpose they anxiously attended to every objection, and every proposal, whether resulting from motives of friendship or enmity, to secure or to subvert their hopes of emancipation; they consulted those, who from their situation and pursuits were best acquainted with the difficulties and the doubts existing in the minds of their Protestant brethren; they diligently studied the modes most likely to give complete satisfaction on all those points; and finally, after due and earnest deliberation, they published a declaration* of their tenets, which was signed generally by the Catholics of all descriptions through the kingdom, clergy and laity. It received the warm approbation of their supporters, and imposed silence on many of their opponents. It was circulated as widely as possible throughout the kingdom.

Having thus endeavoured to clear the way by the removal of prejudices, which had long and powerfully operated against them, and wishing to pay every possible respect and deference to the legislature, which had expressed doubts as to what were the real sentiments and wishes of the Catholic body: and being fully convinced, that in order to induce that august assembly to afford relief to three millions of loyal and peaceable subjects, it was incumbent upon them to satisfy them of the unequivocal sense of all the Catholics of Ireland, which could only be fairly collected and fully expressed by delegation;† the Committee therefore devised a plan whereby the sentiments of every individual of their body in Ireland should be ascertained, by means of delegates.

Immediately on the appearance of this plan, a general outcry was raised against it; sedition, tumult, conspiracy and treason, were echoed from

* This declaration is to be seen in the Appendix, No. LXXXVIII.

† This plan of delegation is also to be seen in the Appendix, No. LXXXIX.

county to county, from grand jury to grand jury. Some legislators high in the confidence of their sovereign, and armed with the influence of station and office, presided at those meetings, and were foremost in arraiging measures, upon the merits of which in another place and in another function they were finally to determine.

The exaggerated and alarming language of most of the grand juries imported, that the Catholics of Ireland were on the eve of a general insurrection, ready to hurl the king from his throne, and tear the whole frame of the constitution to pieces.

The Leitrim grand jury denominated the plan "An inflammatory and dangerous publication," and stated, "that they felt it necessary to come forward at that period to declare, that they were ready to support, with their lives and fortunes, their present most valuable constitution in church and state; and that they would resist, to the utmost of their power, the attempts of any body of men, however numerous, who should presume to threaten innovation in either."

The grand jury of the county of Cork denominated the plan "An unconstitutional proceeding, of the most alarming, dangerous, and seditious tendency; an attempt to overawe Parliament:" they stated their determination to "protect and defend, with their lives and property, the present constitution in church and state." That of Roscommon, after the usual epithets of "alarming, dangerous, and seditious," asserted that the plan called upon the whole body of the Roman Catholics of Ireland to associate themselves in the metropolis of that kingdom, upon the model of the National Assembly of France, which had already plunged that devoted country into a state of anarchy and tumult unexampled in any civilized nation: they stated it to be "an attempt to overawe Parliament;" they mentioned their serious and sensible alarms for the existence of their present happy establishment in church and state; and their determination, "at the hazard of every thing dear to them, to uphold and maintain the Protestant interest of Ireland."

The grand jury of Sligo resolved, "that they would, at all times, and by every constitutional means in their power, resist and oppose every attempt then making, or thereafter to be made, by the Roman Catholics, to obtain their elective franchise, or any participation in the government of the country." And that of Donegal declared, that, though "they regarded
" the

“ the Catholics with tenderness, they would maintain, at the hazard of every thing dear to them, the Protestant interest of Ireland.”

The grand jury of Fermanagh, professing also “ the warmest attachment to their Roman Catholic brethren,” felt it however necessary to come forward at that period to declare, that they were “ ready with their lives and fortunes to support their present invaluable constitution in church and state.” And that of the county of Derry, after expressing their apprehensions, lest that proceeding “ might lead to the formation of an hierarchy (consisting partly of laity) which would destroy the Protestant ascendancy, the freedom of the elective franchise, and the established constitution of this country,” tendered their lives and fortunes to support the happy constitution as established at the Revolution of 1688. A very great majority of the leading signatures affixed to those resolutions, were those of men either high in the government of the country, or enjoying lucrative places under it, or possessing extensive borough interest.

The grand jury of the county of Louth, with the Speaker of the House of Commons at their head, declared, “ That the allowing to Roman Catholics the right of voting for members to serve in Parliament, or admitting them to any participation in the government of the kingdom, was incompatible with the safety of the Protestant establishment, the continuance of the succession to the crown in the illustrious House of Hanover, and finally tended to shake, if not destroy, their connexion with Great Britain, on the continuance and inseparability of which depended the happiness and prosperity of that kingdom; that they would oppose every attempt towards such a dangerous innovation, and that they would support with their lives and fortunes the present constitution, and the settlement of the throne on his Majesty’s Protestant House.” The freeholders of the county of Limerick charged the Catholic Committee with an intention to over-awe the legislature, to force a repeal of the penal laws, and to create a popish democracy for their government and direction in pursuit of whatever objects might be holden out to them by turbulent and seditious men. They then instructed their representatives in Parliament, “ At all events, to oppose any proposition which might be made for extending to Catholics the right of elective franchise:” at this meeting the Chancellor was present. The corporation of Dublin in strong terms denied the competency of Parliament to extend the right of franchise to the Catholics, which they called “ alienating their most valuable
“ able

“ ble inheritance ;” and roundly asserted against the fact, that “ the last session of Parliament left the Roman Catholics in no wise different from their Protestant fellow-subjects, save only in the exercise of political power.”

Some of the grand juries indignantly rejected the proposals made to them of coming to any resolutions injurious to their Catholic brethren. Agents had been employed to tamper with every grand jury that met during the summer assizes. Nothing could tend more directly than this measure of pre-engaging the sentiments of the country against three millions of its inhabitants, to raise and foment discord and disunion between Protestants and Catholics. Counter-resolutions, answers and replies, addresses and protestations, were published and circulated in the public papers* from some grand jurymen, and from many different bodies of Catholics ; several bold and severe publications appeared during the course of the summer, not only from individuals of the Catholic body, but from the friends of their cause amongst the Protestants. It is scarcely questionable but that the virulent and acrimonious opposition raised against the Catholic petition for a very limited participation of the elective franchise, enlivened the sense of their grievances, opened their views, and united their energies into a common effort to procure a general repeal of the whole penal code. The late Earl of Clare, Mr. Foster, and some others, who were generally considered as the monopolizers of the political power of the state, were prominently conspicuous in attending the meetings, at which some of the strongest resolutions were entered into. It was the general conviction of the people, that all the grand juries throughout the nation had been packed, to extinguish even in embryo the Catholics’ hope of further emancipation. Reflection aggravates oppression : and the removal of a trivial portion of an overpowering burden, so far from relieving, renders the oppressed more sensible of the remaining load.

Of all the publications which were dispersed in the course of the year, none produced a stronger impression on the public mind, than a Digest of the Popery Laws made by Mr. Simon Butler, the Chairman of the Society of the United Irishmen, which was published by order of that society. It was a very cor-

* The columns of the daily newspapers were filled with charges, defences, and recriminations, which fatally proved the extensive influence and unwearied exertions of that part of Protestant Ireland, which was in possession of the political power and its attendant sweets, against three millions and a half at least of their countrymen. Specimens are to be seen in Appendix, No. XC.

rect analysis of those laws : it consequently brought into view all the penalties and disabilities, to which the body remained still subject, after the puny relief of the pompous bill of Sir Hercules Langrishe. It would be unfair, if the historian were to represent the transactions of a particular period from consequences, that appeared at a distant interval of time, and the subsequent fate of many of the actors in the scenes. It is his duty faithfully to represent them as they really passed at the time. Merit and demerit can only attach from previous or co-existing circumstances ; not from the posthumous issue engendered in the womb of time by future base and unavowed connections. It was not because an individual was guilty of treason in the year 1798, that every previous act or transaction, in which that individual was concerned for the twenty, ten, or five preceding years, was affected with the venom of his latter crime. Whatever opinions may be formed of the motives, views, and conduct of particular bodies of men by others, it is first requisite to know at least those, which they themselves profess and fairly avow. A vindication of the conduct and principles of the Roman Catholics of Ireland from the charges made against them by certain late grand juries, and other interested bodies in that country, was published by order of the Committee. *

It

* In this work they sum up a recapitulation of the grievances, by which they were still affected ; and then conclude : “ Such is the situation of three millions of good and faithful subjects in their native land ! Excluded from every trust, power, or emolument of the state, civil or military ; excluded from all the benefits of the constitution in all its parts ; excluded from all corporate rights, and immunities ; expelled from grand juries, restrained in petit juries ; excluded from every direction, from every trust, from every incorporated society, from every establishment occasional or fixed, instituted for public defence, public police, public morals, or public convenience ; from the Bench, from the Bank, from the Exchange, from the University, from the College of Physicians : from what are they not excluded ? There is no institution, which the wit of man has invented, or the progress of society produced, which private charity or public munificence has founded for the advancement of education, learning, and good arts, for the permanent relief of age, infirmity, or misfortune, for the superintendence of which, and all cases where common charity would permit, from the enjoyment of which the legislature has not taken care to exclude the Catholics of Ireland. Such is the state, which the corporation of Dublin have thought proper to assert, “ differs in no respect from that of the Protestants, save only in the exercise of political “ power ; ” and the host of grand juries consider “ as essential to the existence of the constitution, “ to the permanency of the connexion with England, and the continuation of the throne in his “ Majesty’s Royal House.” A greater libel on the constitution, the connexion or the succession, could not be pronounced, nor one more pregnant with dangerous and destructive consequences, than

It was matter of curious speculation to reflect upon the bold and confident assurance, with which the Catholics now represented their grievances, which

this, which asserts, that they are only to be maintained and continued by the slavery and oppression of three millions of good and loyal subjects.

It is the duty of the General Committee to reply to those objections made against their present proceedings which appear to have any weight :---In the first place, it is asserted that they are "a Popish Congress, formed for the purpose of overawing the legislature." Without descending to observe on the invidious appellation of "a Popish Congress," they consider the intention to overawe Parliament as the substantial part of the charge. Against the truth of this accusation they do most solemnly protest. They utterly abjure, disclaim, and renounce the holding such an intention ; and they call upon their enemies to point out the word, action, or publication of the Catholics of Ireland, which can, before rational and dispassionate minds, be construed to bear such an absurd and wicked import. If none such can be shewn, if the conduct of the Catholics for a century past has been uniformly peaceable, dutiful, and submissive, they trust their views and motives will be fairly judged on their own merits, and not on forced constructions, unwarranted by the actions, and thus solemnly again disclaimed as the intention of the Committee.

"They are charged with exciting discontent, tumult, and sedition. After the enumeration of grievances, under which the Catholics of Ireland labour, it is attributing too much to this Committee, to say that they are the cause of the present discontents. As to tumult and sedition, they challenge those, who make the assertion to shew the instance. Where have there been riots, or tumults, or seditions, which can in the most remote degree be traced to the proceedings or publications of this Committee ? They know too well how fatal to their hopes of emancipation any thing like disturbance must be. Independent of the danger to those hopes, it is more peculiarly their interest to preserve peace and good order, than that of any body of men in the community. They have a large stake in the country, much of it vested in that kind of property which is most peculiarly exposed to danger from popular tumult. The General Committee would suffer more by one week's disturbance than all the members of the two Houses of Parliament.

"But the most complete refutation of this unjust charge is the very measure, which is made the pretence for bringing it forward. When the humble petition already recited was in the last session presented to Parliament, it was rejected with circumstances of peculiar disgrace and ignominy ; and, as one reason for that rejection, it was insisted, that the petitioners did not speak the sense of the Catholic body ; it therefore became necessary to ascertain what the sense of that body was, and the Committee submit, whether a plan for collecting the general sentiment could be devised more quiet, peaceable, orderly, and efficacious, than summoning from each county and city of Ireland, the most respectable and intelligent gentlemen, who, from their situation and connexions, best knew the wishes of their countrymen, and from their property must be most desirous and most capable of securing tranquillity and good order. But in a case like the present, there is no argument so powerful as the fact. The choice of the Catholics has been universally made without a single instance of irregularity or disorder. There is more riot and disturbance in one day at a contested election for a common

which some few years before they had scarcely dared to mention or allude to.*

The Catholic committee became obnoxious to government in proportion to the sympathy and connection, which it was supposed existed between them and the Society of United Irishmen and other political clubs which then existed for promoting civil freedom. In fact several of their leading members took public occasions of expressing the gratitude, which the Catholics felt for the liberal and warm exertions of those societies in their favor. On the

common potwalloping borough, than occurred in choosing delegates to the committee from the thirty-two counties, and every great city of this kingdom."

* Soon after the rejection of the committee's petition to parliament, it was published with a very strong preface, little calculated to soothe the minds of those who chiefly opposed it in parliament. In that preface, this language is holden.

"The original intention was, that the petition should have been presented the first day of the session. At that time nothing had yet appeared of that strong expression of opinion, which those who delight in figurative modes of speech, would call the sense of the house. The happy arts, by which the minds of men have been filled with alarm and confusion had not been extended beyond the constituent part of the Protestant commons. No advantage had been gained against the Roman Catholics in any other place. No man had yet made a forced march—to pre-occupy the ground—to seize upon the measure—in order, as it were, on the post and citadel of relief, to open a battery upon the Roman Catholics. In appearance to flabber them over with the gross and filthy flaver of a canting simulated affection, but in reality to corrode their fame with the venom of slanderous aspersion—to play fast and loose with names and things—to trick out a vain and spurious image of departed aristocracy; to call it the real Catholics; and (with a strange mixture of absurdity and impudence) to refuse their name to the people themselves—to damn the deluded few with fraudulent praise—to brand the guiltless many with false imputation—to hold out to the Protestant mind delusive securities, to refuse real fears—in one hand to carry liberality, toleration, grace and favor; and with the other, to scatter division, distraction, suspicion, and discontent. Such is the epitome of the game which has been played against the Catholics. It was a thing to be desired, that if possible, they should have anticipated by the promptitude of their movements, this complicated involution of hostile manœuvre. That not being the case, the enemies of the Catholics (and therefore the enemies of their country) have gained a momentary advantage—but one which may end in their shame and confusion.

"To develop this whole mystery of criminal folly, unravel the perplexed labyrinth of passion, absurdity and fraud, through which it has been thought expedient to wind the question of the Roman Catholics, will be the task of a leisure hour. Many are the paths that lead to death, and many are the ways, by which a kingdom may be brought to the ground. Amongst these not the least effectual is, in a great national crisis—the substitution of a low craft, the little tricks of state, the miserable equivocation of double politics, in the room of true policy; that is to say, the generous manly decisions of honor, truth, and justice."

23d of March, 1792, in a debate of the committee, Mr. Keogh said, that for a late publication, (the digest of the Popery laws), the United Irishmen and their respectable chairman, Mr. Simon Butler, demanded their warmest gratitude. It was natural for persons staggering under oppression cordially to grasp every hand, that held out relief. Amidst the variety of these political societies, there were few that admitted Catholics amongst them. The Whig Club would not even permit the Catholic question to be agitated amongst them.* Had it been true, as it is fashionable with the traducers of the Irish nation to assert, that there was as much treason in Dublin in 1792, as in the

* In November, 1792, at a meeting of the Whig Club, Mr. Huband observed, that in that critical period it became necessary for them to remember, that they were looked up to as the leaders of the nation, as an association in which the rank, the property, and the talents of the kingdom were concentrated. A question of superior magnitude was never agitated by the community, and was at the next session to be agitated in parliament, he meant the Catholic question; a question which ultimately was to decide whether the inhabitants of that country were ever to be worthy of the name of a people or not? He therefore hoped that the sense of the meeting would be taken as to what line of conduct they would adopt in parliament next winter.

Some gentlemen decidedly asserted, that they did not think the Catholic question ought to be mentioned or discussed in the Whig Club. They were averse to their having any concern in it, and one went so far as to say, that if it were admitted to be debated in that society, he would with his own hand strike his name out of the list of the members.

On which Mr. A. Ham. Rowan observed, that he would be as tenacious as any other gentleman, of remaining in any society where improper subjects were proposed for discussion; but that for his part, he would not hesitate to strip off his Whig Club uniform, and throw it to the waiter, if the Catholic question were deemed an unfit subject for their discussion.

Mr. W. Browne called the attention of gentlemen to the purpose of their association. They placed themselves in the front of the public cause, to further it, not to stop its further progress; the second principle of their declaration was, a solemn engagement to support the rights of the people, &c. Who, said he, are the people? I dare any gentleman to name the people of Ireland without including the Roman Catholics. What! is it a question, shall three millions of Irishmen continue slaves or obtain their freedom! Is it a question to be deserted by men professing patriotism, professing to redress the public oppression, pledged to stand together in defence of their country's liberties? No; it is not.

To desert the cause of the Catholics, would be to desert the principles of their institution, it would be to deserve the calumny thrown against them by their enemies, that they were an opposition struggling for power, not a band of patriots for the public weal; it would rob their names of honour, their rank and wealth of consequence, and it would finally sink them from a station of political importance, down to the obscurity and insignificance of an interested and impotent party.

On the question being put, whether the Catholic question should be taken into consideration or not on Wednesday fortnight, it was negatived on a division by thirteen.

year

year 1798, and that these political clubs or societies were the hot-beds of rebellion, it would be an high, though unintended compliment to the Catholics, who were generally excluded from them.

To such alarming excesses had the French revolution now been pushed, that every symptom of sympathizing with that cause, became in the eyes of government, a crime little short of treason. Early in the spring, the intended celebration of the anniversary of the French Revolution at Belfast on the 14th of July, was announced in the public prints, and all the volunteers of the province of Ulster were invited to assist at it. Mr. Tone sent down to Belfast, by order of the Society of the United Irishmen of Dublin, some resolutions, they had lately entered into, the general purport of which was a complete internal union of all the people of Ireland, to resist the weight of English influence. They were to be communicated to them on the day of their meeting, in the hopes of their adopting them. The commemoration was celebrated with great pomp and splendor: several emblematic figures and representations were exhibited with inscriptions appropriate to the occasion.† As some very warm resolutions had been heretofore entered into by the northern volunteers in favor of Catholic emancipation, and the great (indeed the only ostensible) principle of the different societies of United Irishmen, was the affection and union of Irishmen of every religious denomination, the Catholics considered this general assemblage of the Protestants of the north, as a favorable opportunity of engaging them more deeply and zealously in their cause; they sent down about a dozen discreet persons to Belfast in order to keep up and encourage the union with the Protestants of the north. They valued the liberality of the present generation the more, by how much the Catholic cause had heretofore suffered from the rancour of their ancestors. When the procession was over, the volunteers, and many of the inhabitants of the town assembled in the Linen-hall and entered upon the discussion of politics. The principal subjects were parliamentary reform and Catholic emancipation: in

* On a group of figures drawn by horses was the following inscription. "The releasement of the prisoners from the Bastile." On the reverse, there was a figure of "Hibernia, with one hand and foot in shackles, and a volunteer presenting to her a figure of Liberty." The following motto was inscribed on another: "Our Gallic brethren were born July 14th, 1789: alas! we are still in embryo." On the reverse, "Superstitious jealousy, the cause of the Irish Bastile: Let us unite and destroy it." Among them appeared the portrait of Doctor Franklin, with this motto, "Where liberty is, there is my country."

favor of both of which questions they entered into strong resolutions. They then voted an address to the national assembly of France, and another to the people of Ireland. It was not in nature, that three millions of the people should remain passive and unmoved, whilst the fourth million, which made up the population of that kingdom, was in the height of a political fever. There is nothing in the Catholic more than in the Protestant religion, to prevent a diversity of sentiment upon lawful political opinions. And although a common cause of suffering may be generally supposed to unite the individuals of a body, yet in truth there seldom has existed so large a portion of mankind less united than the Catholics of Ireland. The penal code made them indeed a body apart, but it necessarily scattered amongst them the seeds of discord and disunion, which might have been no secondary motive in the framing of the ferocious and unnatural code of laws against them. For it is a fatal truth, that the Machiavelian policy *divide et impera* was too constantly brought to bear upon that devoted kingdom, as long as it was considered a divided and subordinate country: and such would it have ever continued to be deemed unless united to the head of the empire.

The Catholic committee had in February, 1792, published, as has been before observed, an address to their Protestant brethren, and the public in general, respecting the calumnies and misrepresentations so industriously circulated with regard to their principles and conduct; to which they added the former opinions of five Catholic universities upon certain tenets usually imputed to Roman Catholics by the Protestants of that country.* They were procured at the desire of Mr. Pitt, before the bill was passed in favour of the Roman Catholics of England.

By this publication, they conceived they had removed every reasonable objection on the score of religious opinion. Yet, after the severe summer campaign, in which they had to encounter so much obloquy and imputation from grand juries, and other meetings of Protestants, who had been packed and stimulated to this end by the chancellor, the speaker of the House of Commons, and some other sharers in the monopoly of the civil power of the state; they found it necessary also to remove or prevent fresh prejudices, which were attempted to be raised against their civil conduct in applying for redress of grievances. On the 13th of September, 1792, at a meeting of the

* The queries and answers are to be seen in the Appendix, No. XCI.

sub-committee of the Catholics, they came to the following resolutions: “ That having seen, with great concern, a variety of publications, censuring “ the circular letter lately issued by them, said to be signed Edward Byrne, “ and erroneously stated to be illegal and unconstitutional, had thought it “ their duty to submit that letter to the inspection of the Hon. Simon Butler, “ and Beresford Burston, Esq. two gentlemen of the first eminence in the “ profession, and who had the honour to be of his majesty’s council.”

In the course of a very few days, the case laid before those two gentlemen, with their opinions upon it, were published and circulated with all possible industry.* Upon the strength of these opinions, the Catholics proceeded in their plan of chusing delegates for each district throughout the kingdom: the elections were completed with the utmost celerity, and without the shadow of disturbance. The first meeting of those delegates was holden in Taylor’s hall, Dublin, on the 2d of December, 1792. The confidence, with which the Catholics now looked up to their emancipation, brought them frequently together; and beside the committee of delegates, other collections of them occasionally met to consult upon the measures to be pursued towards attaining their great object of liberation. From the publication of their proceedings their spirit and feeling on that great and critical occasion are sufficiently manifest. In the attainment of this object they naturally considered those only as their enemies, who opposed their efforts, and by the common workings of nature were cordial and grateful to every sincere co-operator with them in the work of emancipation. On the 31st of October, 1792, the Catholic inhabitants of the city of Dublin were convened by public summons in the Exhibition room, in Exchequer-street. The principal and immediate occasion of this meeting was a post meeting of the lord mayor, sheriffs, commons, and citizens of Dublin, at the Exhibition house, in William-street, on the 11th of September, pursuant to requisition for the purpose of taking into consideration the letter circulated and signed *Edward Byrne*; at which they came to an unanimous resolution, that a letter upon the subject should be addressed to the Protestants of Ireland.† This letter was highly offensive to the Catholic inhabitants of the metropolis, who were not admitted to the post meeting: it was read from a public print, and a committee of eight gentle-

* They are to be seen in the Appendix, No. XCII.

† This letter is to be seen in the Appendix, No. XCIII.

men* was appointed to prepare an answer to it, which should be published as the unanimous act of that meeting. In the mean time they embraced that opportunity of repeating their thanks to the illustrious characters in both houses of parliament, who had nobly stood forward in support of their emancipation, and the right of the subject to petition for redress of grievances. They also declared, that their warmest gratitude was due, and thereby respectfully given to their countrymen the citizens of Belfast, for their uniform and manly exertions in support of their cause, and for the example of liberality and genuine public spirit, which they had thereby shewn to the kingdom at large. They also thanked the different volunteer corps lately reviewed at Belfast; the Protestant freeholders of Cork; the different gentlemen, who at grand jury and county meetings, had supported their cause; and all other amongst their Protestant brethren, who had manifested a wish for their emancipation: and their chairman (Mr. Braughall) was ordered to transmit copies of that day's proceedings to the chairman of the town-meeting at Belfast, the chairmen of the different societies of United Irishmen; the different reviewing officers in Ulster, and the other distinguished characters, who had interested themselves in the cause of Catholic emancipation.

These expressions of gratitude from any of the Catholics to the Protestant supporters and friends of their cause, were highly displeasing to government; and the real enemies to the Catholics were indefatigable in attempting to identify the cause of Catholic emancipation with that of French democracy and Irish treason. Several circumstances occurred in the course of this year, which tended to affix a stigma beyond disaffection to some of the political societies and military corps. The national guard, a new military body, was this year arrayed and disciplined in Dublin. They wore green uniforms, with buttons engraved with a harp, under a cap of liberty, instead of a crown. Their leaders were A. H. Rowan and James Napper Tandy; they affected to address each other by the appellation of citizen, in imitation of the French. This corps was in high favour with the populace, and were always cordially greeted as they appeared in the street or on parade. Government really felt alarm: a general insurrection was apprehended: they pretended to have information of the particular nights fixed for that purpose. The magistrates by orders of government patrolled the streets with bodies of horse each night.

* Viz. Randall M'Donald, John Keogh, Hugh Hamill, Edward Byrne, Thomas Ryan, Thomas Warren, Charles Ryan, and John Ball. The answer, in form of a declaration, is to be seen in the Appendix, No. XCIV.

It was given out from the Castle, that the custom-house, the post-office, and the gaol, were the first places to be attacked; and that the signal for rising was to have been the pulling down of the statue of King William in College-green with ropes. Many other false rumours of conspiracies and assassinations were set afloat. In the mean while, the national guards, and all the volunteer corps of Dublin, were summoned, to assemble on Sunday, the 9th of December, 1792, to celebrate the victory of the French, and the triumph of universal liberty. The summons began with an affectation of Gallicism, "*Citizen Soldier*." However, the meeting itself, and whatever mischief had been intended, was prevented; and government issued a proclamation on the 8th of December, against their assembling. The national guards did not assemble; and the only persons who appeared on parade were, A. H. Rowan, J. N. Tandy, and Carey the printer.

Amongst other events of the year 1792, that tended to inflame the public mind, were the growth and extension of Defenderism. As the Defenders were generally Catholics, it then was and has since been the theme of the enemies to the Catholics, to connect the cause of Catholic emancipation with the cause and outrages of those lawless miscreants. Until that time they had not appeared beyond the counties of Armagh and Louth: now they suddenly appeared in bodies in the county of Meath, particularly in those parts which adjoin to Cavan. There, and in the adjacent parts of Cavan, there resided numerous tribes of Presbyterians, called by the common people Scots. Between these, and the lower order of Catholics, there had prevailed for many years an hereditary animosity; and it is hard to say on which side ignorance and religious prejudices preponderated. The Defenders on this occasion were the aggressors: their plan was to procure arms, and to deprive all those of arms, who were not engaged in their cause. They began with the Presbyterians, and not in the most courteous manner.

The Scots took the alarm; their brethren of the County of Cavan joined; and they soon appeared in force, more formidable by their knowledge of the use of arms, than by their numbers. They were encouraged and headed by magistrates, clergymen, and attorneys. Their fury against these aggressors, who were mostly Catholics, fell indiscriminately against all of that persuasion. The Defenders, who hitherto had acted only by night, now ventured to appear in open day. They assembled to the number of about an hundred and fifty men, some with fire arms, and the rest with such weapons as they

could procure, near Petersville, the seat of Mr. Tucker, a moderate and humane man. Their avowed intention was to rescue some of their party, who had been detained as prisoners by the Scots in the little town of Baileborough: but on receiving intelligence that the Scots were marching into that neighbourhood, they altered their plan, and resolved to meet their old enemies. The Scots were accompanied with a party of the military, all under the direction of magistrates. On their approach the Defenders took advantage of a wall, and lay in ambush: but notwithstanding this advantage, they did no execution; some of them discharged their pieces very awkwardly; and on the first fire from the military and Scots, they fled with precipitation. Such of them as were most closely pursued, sought shelter in the house of Mr. Tucker; and some of that gentleman's innocent labourers, terrified by what they were only spectators of, took refuge in the same place. The house was soon entered: innocent and guilty were dragged from their hiding places, and butchered in cold blood, with circumstances of barbarous cruelty. It is justice to say, that the military behaved on this occasion with as much humanity as gallantry. Some of the Peep of Day Boys, flushed with these outrageous murders, sanctioned by the presence of magistrates, on their return to Kells, most wantonly shot an innocent traveller on the road. After this exploit, they over-run the country, pillaged, plundered, burned, without requiring any mark of guilt but religion: and their proceedings, if not encouraged, were at least connived at; until the Earl of Bellamont, by his authority, refrained those of the county of Cavan; and their brethren of Meath, finding themselves abandoned by those, who formed the greatest strength of the party, soon became also quiet. Thus was the progress of the Defenders effectually stopped on that side; but their cause was entirely ruined in the barony of Kells. The Catholics, though openly and avowedly pointed at during those transactions, never complained of the outrages of the Scots, lest even their complaints might seem to encourage the unprincipled wretches, who had disturbed the peace of the country.

The multiplication of political societies in Ireland was an unequivocal symptom of the malignancy of the fever in which the public mind was at this time kept. Besides those already mentioned, there had been recently instituted the Society of the Friends of the Constitution, Liberty, and Peace.*

* Of this even the great libeller of his country admits, that there were many men of principle and good fortunes, who wished for nothing but a simple reform of parliament, were members of it, but

The Duke of Leinster, and many of the leading men of the opposition, were members.

In the mean while the Catholic convention having been convened in Dublin met in Tailor's Hall in Back-lane, and frequently assembled: they were called in derision the *Back-lane Parliament*. Several of the leading members of the former committee had like other of their countrymen caught the general flame of liberty, and professed themselves as anxious for carrying the great national object of parliamentary reform through all its branches, as they were for their own emancipation: and it was for a time doubted, whether they should address the parliament, as Roman Catholics or as Irishmen. In the course of the summer a reconciliation or coalition had been generally effected between the committee and several of the sixty-four addressers. Convinced, that his majesty's ministers in England were disposed to favor their pretensions,

but did not know the latent designs of the rebels. The spirit of this association will appear from their declaration, which every member was obliged to subscribe: and which with an impressive address to the public upon the necessity of checking the efforts of government to undermine the constitution, were agreed to, whilst the Duke of Leinster was in the chair, on the 27th of December, 1792.

DECLARATION.

" I SOLEMNLY promise and declare, that I will, by all lawful means, promote a radical
 " and effectual reform in the representation of the people in parliament, including persons of all
 " religious persuasions; and that I will unceasingly pursue that object until it shall have been unequivocally obtained: and, seriously apprehending the dangerous consequences of certain levelling
 " tenets, and seditious principles, which have lately been disseminated, I do further declare, that I
 " will resist all attempts to introduce any new form of government into this country, or in any
 " manner to subvert or impair our constitution, consisting of king, lords and commons."

They also published the following resolutions:—" That this society, conscious of its good intentions, but diffident of its ability to judge of the best means of attaining an object of such magnitude and difficulty, as that which it has been proposed, deems it essential to that object, and therefore respectfully recommends that similar associations should be formed in every county and principal town throughout the kingdom. With such associations, and with every individual friend to the constitution, liberty, and peace in these kingdoms, this society will be happy to communicate, and will thankfully receive every species of information concerning facts, or even hints, concerning plans and principles which may assist in deciding on matters either of propriety or expediency. Such materials the society will deem it a duty to arrange and digest; and as it shall be enabled to select, or to form a plan of representation, which may appear worthy the attention of the public, it will, with the utmost deference, lay such plan before the people of Ireland, for their consideration and correction, previous to its being submitted to the wisdom of the legislature."

it was found political in the body to act in concert; and to this accommodating disposition and desire of internal union, is to be attributed the moderation of the public acts of that convention. They framed a petition * to the king, which was a firm though modest representation of their grievances: it was signed by Dr. Troy and Dr. Moylan on behalf of themselves and the other Roman Catholic prelates and clergy of Ireland, and by the several delegates for the different districts, which they respectively represented. They then proceeded to chuse five delegates to present it to his majesty: the choice fell upon Sir Thomas French, Mr. Byrne, Mr. Keogh, Mr. Devereux, and Mr. Bellew. These gentlemen went by short seas: in their road to Donaghadee they past through Belfast in the morning, and some of the most respectable inhabitants waited upon them at the Donegal Arms, where they remained about two hours: upon their departure, the populace took their horses from their carriages and dragged them through the town amidst the liveliest shouts of joy and wishes for their success. The delegates returned these expressions of affection and sympathy, by the most grateful acknowledgments and assurances of their determination to maintain that union, which formed the strength of Ireland. On the 2d of January, 1793, the gentlemen delegated by the Catholics of Ireland attended the levee at St. James's, were introduced to his majesty by Mr. Dundas, secretary of state for the home department, and had the honor of presenting their humble petition to his majesty, who was pleased most graciously to receive it. Without loss of time they returned to Dublin the welcome heralds of the benign countenance and reception they had received from the father of his people.

Since Ireland had gained a constitution, no year was so pregnant with great events to that kingdom as the year 1793. The parliament met on the 10th of January, and as the session, which lasted to the 16th of August, was most interesting and important, it will be proper to prepare the reader for the effects of that session by submitting to him the faithful and authentic account of the state of the nation at the time of its opening. So alarming did the state of the nation appear to the lords, that very early in the session they appointed a secret committee to enquire into the causes of the disorders and disturbances, which prevailed in several parts of the kingdom, to prevent their extension,

* This petition is to be seen in the Appendix, No. XCV. with a list of the names of the delegates who signed it.

and report the result of their enquiries to that house: their report was: that, the people at that time called defenders * were very different from those who had

* The purport of this report seems calculated to impress the reader with an idea that the collections made by the Catholics at the desire of their committee, were, if not intended, at least in part applied to the support, encouragement, or defence of these lawless banditti. The following proceeding of that committee was published with a view to counteract that effect, and shews the actual levy as well as the application of the money.

That a committee of six be appointed to inspect and examine our accounts, and that the following gentlemen be the said committee:

Sir T. H. French, Bart. - - Co. Galway,
 Luke Teeling, Esq. - - - Co. Antrim,
 Edward Sweetman, Esq. - - Co. Wexford,
 Francis Arthur, Esq. - - - City of Limerick,
 John Mansfield, Esq. - - - Co. Waterford, and
 T. Fitzgerald, jun. Esq. - - Co. Kildare.

And the said committee having sat from day to day, and minutely examined the accounts, report as follows:

Report of the Committee of Accounts, 22d April, 1793.

We the committee of accounts, having examined the different vouchers laid before us, which we present herewith, have, for the purpose of stating them in the clearest and concise manner, compressed them in the annexed schedule, under the different titles to which they were invariably applied.

The Result of the whole is:

	£.	s.	d.
That on the 1st January, 1792, a balance remained in your treasurer's hands of	- -	18	13 5
Together with nine government debentures, since sold for	- - - -	899	14 6
That there has been collected in the city of Dublin	- - - -	2022	4 6
From other cities, towns, and counties	- - - -	2258	11 3
		<u>5199</u>	<u>3 8</u>
That the several sums paid on account of the Catholics of Ireland, amount to	-	5488	5 9 $\frac{1}{2}$
Which leaves a balance against the Catholic body of	- - - -	289	2 1 $\frac{1}{2}$

Account of Receipts and Disbursements of the General Committee of the Catholics of Ireland,
 April 22d, 1793.

March, 1792.	£.	s.	d.	Dr.
To paid retaining fee to Richard Burke, Esq.	- - -	56	17 6	
To paid Richard Burke, Esq.	- - - -	2264	12 11	
Carried forward	- -	<u>2321</u>	<u>10 5</u>	To

had originally assumed that appellation, and were all, as far as the committee could discover, of the Roman Catholic persuasion; in general poor ignorant labouring

	<i>£.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
Brought forward - - - - -	2321	10	5
To paid fees to counsellors Burston and Hon. Simon Butler, with Mr. Byrne's letter, - - - - -	11	7	6
To paid T. W. Tone, Esq. agent to the committee, in part of 1500l. voted to him - - - - -	206	17	6
To paid various advertisements, publications, and stationary - - - - -	1486	2	4
Due to printers, per accounts, - - - - -	626	19	0
	<u>2113</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>4</u>
January, 1793.			
To paid for fundry petty disbursements, per account - - - - -	98	14	11
To paid for postage, per John Keogh, Esq. - - - - -	56	17	6
To paid for ditto, John Sweetman, Esq. - - - - -	50	0	0
To paid counsellors Butler and Emmett, for perusing Catholic bill - - - - -	45	10	0
To paid Richard M'Cormick, Esq. account of postage, and other trifling disbursements - - - - -	15	18	9
To loss on light guineas - - - - -	9	14	7
To paid J. M'Dermot, a clerk - - - - -	7	11	8
To paid William Long for the hire of a coach to and from London, and freight of the same - - - - -	51	1	7½
To paid W. T. Jones, Esq. in part of the sum of 1500l. voted to him - - - - -	500	0	0
	<u>£. 5488</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>9½</u>
January, 1792.			
			Cr.
By cash in hands of treasurer, per account - - - - -	18	13	5
By nine government debentures in the treasurer's hands, fold for - - - - -	899	14	6
By collections made in the city of Dublin, per account - - - - -	2022	4	6
February, 1793.			
By Subscriptions paid into the Treasurer from the several Counties and Towns.			
From Co. Kildare - - - - -	113	15	0
Dunboyne - - - - -	5	13	9
Dungannon - - - - -	53	14	1½
Kilkenny - - - - -	100	0	0
Rofs, co. Wexford - - - - -	13	13	0
The city of Limerick - - - - -	350	0	0
Drogheda - - - - -	318	0	0½
	<u>954</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>11</u>
Carried forward - - - - -	3895	8	4
			Ballvmahon

labouring men, sworn to secrecy, and impressed with an opinion, that they were assisting the Catholic cause; in other respects they did not appear to have any

	Brought forward	-	-	3895	8	4
Ballymahon	-	-	-	70	10	6
J. Scully, co. Tipperary,	-	-	-	15	0	0
Co. Monaghan,	-	-	-	152	11	2½
Co. Mayo	-	-	-	38	13	6
Dingle	-	-	-	32	8	4½
Co. Cavan	-	-	-	30	1	4½
Co. Wexford	-	-	-	207	8	1
Thomas Bennett, Esq.	-	-	-	34	2	6
Co. Wicklow	-	-	-	27	5	5½
Stradbally, Queen's co.	-	-	-	62	11	3
Co. of Down	-	-	-	82	15	0
Town of Wexford	-	-	-	30	0	0
Co. of Dublin	-	-	-	300	0	0
Rowland Norris, Esq.	-	-	-	11	7	6
Arklow, co. Wicklow	-	-	-	38	8	1
Mr. Wife	-	-	-	11	7	6
Co. Roscommon	-	-	-	153	5	0
				<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
					1297	15 4
					<hr/>	<hr/>
				£.	5199	3 8
Balance against the Catholics	-	-	-		289	2 1½
					<hr/>	<hr/>
				£.	5488	5 9½
					<hr/>	<hr/>

That by the foregoing report of the committee, specially appointed to inspect the accounts of the expenditure of money raised by voluntary subscription, in order to defray the necessary expenses of our constitutional and legal exertions, it appears, that said monies have been invariably applied with the strictest regard to the peace and happiness of the country, and for well-known and legal purposes.

That notwithstanding the earnest endeavours and frequent exhortations of the general and sub-committees, it appears that many of the lower orders of Catholics have persisted in associating with those deluded people called "DEFENDERS." We take this opportunity again to repeat, what, we have so often, collectively and individually, endeavoured to impress on their minds, our utmost detestation and abhorrence of such illegal and criminal proceedings; and we once more call on those unhappy men, if such yet remain, by every thing dear to them, to us, and to posterity, to desist from such unwarrantable acts of violence, which have already proved fatal to so many of themselves, and to return to their obedience to the laws, and the laudable pursuits of honest industry.

That a committee be appointed to examine, and report what honourable engagements the Catholics of Ireland lie under, for services received.

The

any distinct particular object in view, but they talked of being relieved from hearth-money, tithes, county cesses, and of lowering their rents. They first appeared

The following gentlemen were accordingly chosen of the committee :

Thomas Fitzgerald, jun. Esq. (chairman)	-	-	-	Co. Kildare
Morgan Kavanagh, Esq.	-	-	-	Queen's Co.
Patrick Mullarky, Esq.	-	-	-	Co. Sligo
James Edward Devereux, Esq.	-	-	-	Co. Wexford
Luke Teeling, Esq.	-	-	-	Co. Antrim
Hugh O'Reilly, Esq.	-	-	-	Co. Cavan
Edward Forestal, Esq.	-	-	-	Co. Kilkenny
Owen O'Connor, Esq.	-	-	-	Co. Roscommon
Christopher Nugent, Esq.	-	-	-	Co. Longford
Hugh Savage, Esq.	-	-	-	Co. Down
Thomas Richard Geraghty, Esq.	-	-	-	Co. Tyrone
Walter Byrne, Esq.	-	-	-	Co. Wicklow
Patrick Ruffel, Esq.	-	-	-	Co. Louth
Sir Thomas Ham. French, Bart.	-	-	-	Co. Galway
James Lalor, Esq.	-	-	-	Co. Tipperary
James Nangle, Esq.	-	-	-	Co. Meath
Andrew Macfhane, Esq.	-	-	-	Co. Donegall
Dr. Reilly, Esq.	-	-	-	Co. Monaghan
Edmund Dillon, Esq.	-	-	-	Co. Mayo
Patrick Smith, Esq.	-	-	-	Co. Dublin
John Mansfield, Esq.	-	-	-	Co. Waterford
Edward Byrne, Esq.	-	-	-	City of Dublin

And said committee having reported,

That the sum of fifteen hundred pounds, together with a gold medal of the value of thirty guineas, bearing a suitable inscription, be presented to Theobald Wolfe Tone, Esq. Agent to this committee, as a testimony of his services, and our gratitude.

That the catholics of Ireland are indebted to the Hon. Simon Butler, one of his majesty's counsel at law, in the sum of five hundred pounds, for his very able digest of the popery laws, with the introduction prefixed thereto, the notes annexed to their petition to his majesty, and a summary of the popery laws now in force; and that the treasurer be ordered to pay the same with all convenient speed.

That the sum of five hundred pounds be presented to William Todd Jones, Esq. for his eminent services to the Catholic cause, making with the like sum heretofore presented, the sum of one thousand pounds; and that the third further sum of five hundred pounds be also presented to him, provided there shall be funds to make good the same, after the positive engagements of this committee shall have been discharged.

That the sum of two thousand pounds be applied to the erecting a statue to our most gracious
Sovereign,

appeared in the county of Louth, in considerable bodies in April last, several of them were armed, they assembled mostly in the night, and forced into the houses

Sovereign, George the Third, as a monument of our gratitude for the important privileges which we have obtained from parliament through his paternal recommendation.

That, as Sir T. H. French, J. E. Devereux, C. Dillon Bellew, J. Keogh, and E. Byrne, Esqrs. our delegates, who presented the petition of the Catholics of Ireland to his majesty, decline furnishing any account of their expences on said deputation, a piece of plate of one hundred guineas value, with a suitable inscription, be presented to each of those five gentlemen, as a memorial of our gratitude for their eminent services on that occasion.

That John Comerford, Esq. be requested to continue treasurer to the Catholics of Ireland; and that every county delegate, together with several delegates resident in Dublin, to be chosen by ballot, be now appointed to superintend the collection and application of money, in pursuance of the foregoing resolutions, and for no other purpose whatsoever; and that it be an instruction to the said delegates, to transmit to each delegate an account of the money received and expended, so soon as the objects for which they are appointed shall have been accomplished, and that five be a quorum.

The following gentlemen resident in Dublin, were accordingly chosen:

Hugh Hamil,	Edward Byrne,
Thomas Braughall,	R. M'Cormick, and
John Sweetman,	D. T. O'Brien,
John Keogh,	Esqrs.

That it be a further instruction to the gentlemen now appointed, to consult, communicate and correspond upon the best and most effectual means of procuring an improved system of education for the Catholic youth of the kingdom of Ireland, and of forming, when practicable, such establishment as may be most conducive thereto.

That John Sweetman, Esq. secretary to our sub-committee, has discharged that trust, with a spirit, activity and diligence equally honorable to himself and serviceable to the Catholic cause, and we embrace this opportunity to testify our sense of his candor and integrity; and the zeal for the public tranquillity which on every occasion he has manifested, qualities which have obtained him the esteem of his fellow-citizens, and more peculiarly entitle him to the gratitude and support of the Catholics of Ireland.

That our warmest thanks be, and are hereby presented to Richard M'Cormick, Esq. secretary to the general committee, for the many important services rendered to the Catholic cause, by his zeal, spirit and diligence; and for the very honorable and disinterested manner, in which he has ever discharged the functions of that office.

That it is with pleasure and gratitude we have observed the House of Commons in this session, unanimously taking into consideration that most important object, the present state of the representation of the people in parliament; and we do most earnestly exhort the Catholics of Ireland to co-operate with their Protestant brethren in all legal and constitutional means to carry into effect that great measure, recognized by the wisdom of parliament, and so essential to the freedom, happiness, and prosperity of Ireland, a reform in the representation of the people in the commons' house.

That by the restoration of the elective franchise, the Catholics of Ireland are now enabled to speak,
Vol. II. 3 D individually,

houses of Protestants, and took from them their arms. These disorders soon spread through the counties of Meath, Cavan, Monaghan, and all other parts adjacent; at first they took nothing but arms, but afterwards they plundered the houses of every thing they could find. Their measures appeared to have been concerted and conducted with the utmost secrecy and a degree of regularity and system, not usual in people of such mean condition, and as if directed by men of superior rank. Sums of money to a considerable amount, had been levied and still continued to be levied upon the Roman Catholics in all parts of the kingdom, by subscriptions and collections at their chapels and elsewhere; some of which levies had been made, and still continued to be made under the authority of a printed circular letter, which had been sent into all parts of the kingdom, a copy of which letter the committee thought it their duty to insert.

“ SIR,

“ BY an order of the sub-committee, dated the 15th day
“ of January, I had the honor to forward you a plan for a general subscrip-

individually, the language of freemen; and as we no longer wish to be considered as a distinct body of his majesty's subjects, we render up our trust to the people, who sent us hither;—

And this committee is hereby dissolved.

The following gentlemen filled the chair in succession.

Harvey Hay, Esq.	-	-	-	Co. Wexford
T. Fitzgerald, jun. Esq.	-	-	-	Co. Kildare
James Archbold, Esq.	-	-	-	Co. Kildare
Owen O'Connor, Esq.	-	-	-	Co. Roscommon
Francis Arthur, Esq.	-	-	-	City of Limerick
Sir Thomas Esmond, Bart.	-	-	-	Co. Wexford
James Nangle, Esq.	-	-	-	Co. Meath
J. Jos. McDonnell, Esq.	-	-	-	Co. Mayo

The general committee have voted the following sums: £. s. d.

To Theobald Wolfe Tone, Esq. agent to the committee	-	-	-	1534	2	6
To the Hon. Simon Butler, for the digest of the popery laws, and other professional business in the service of the general committee	-	-	-	500	0	0
To W. Todd Jones, Esq. balance of 1500l. voted to him	-	-	-	1000	0	0
For raising a statue to his majesty	-	-	-	2000	0	0
For five pieces of plate, to be given to the delegates who presented the petition of the Catholics of Ireland to his majesty	-	-	-	568	15	0
				5602	17	6
Balance, per Schedule	-	-	-	289	2	1½
Total engagement of the Catholic body	£	5891	19	7½		

tion,

“ tion, which had for its object the raising a fund for defraying the heavy
 “ and growing expences incurred by the general committee, in conducting
 “ the affairs of the Catholics of Ireland; as several mistakes have occurred in
 “ the transmission of these letters, owing to my ignorance of the address of
 “ many of the delegates; I am directed to inform you, that such a plan is
 “ now in forwardness throughout the kingdom. A measure so strongly en-
 “ forced by necessity, and so consonant to justice, cannot fail to attract your
 “ very serious attention; the committee having the most perfect reliance on
 “ your zeal, are therefore confident, that you will use your best exertions to
 “ carry this necessary business into full effect.

“ Signed by the Secretary of the Sub-committee.”

“ *Dublin, February 5th, 1793.*

“ P. S. It is hoped that you will acknowledge the receipt of this letter,
 “ stating at the same time whatever progress has been made in your district.”

The several seditious and inflammatory papers published in Dublin, and dispersed through the country, seemed to have countenanced and encouraged the Defenders in their proceedings, and it appeared, that letters were written by a member of the committee of the Roman Catholics at Dublin, previous to the last summer assizes, to a person resident at Dundalk, in one of which the said person in the name of the said Roman Catholic committee, directed enquiries to be made touching the offences, of which the Defenders then in confinement were accused, which enquiries will be best explained, by inserting the said letter in the words following.

“ DEAR SIR,

Dublin, 9th August, 1792.

“ I RECEIVED this day your favor of the 8th instant,
 “ enclosing the different papers respecting the business I wrote you. It
 “ is with much regret that I am obliged to reply, that from the want
 “ of information on the subject matter of the indictments, no precise opi-
 “ nion can be formed, whether the alledged offence is or is not bailable;
 “ the committee are consequently in the dark as to the measures, that should
 “ be adopted, nor can your exertions accelerate (as it seems) that period
 “ until the assizes, when you will be able to obtain office copies of the ex-
 “ aminations. Mr. Nugent's brother left town this day, truly disconsolate,

“ in not being able to effect something towards the liberation of his kinsman,
“ he however did his best in the affair.

“ I am, dear Sir,

“ Your obedient servant,

“ JOHN SWEETMAN.”

“ P. S. If any new occurrences should happen, be good enough to inform me of it.”

And that it appeared, that the said person, to whom the said letter was addressed at Dundalk, did employ, at a considerable expence, an agent and counsel to act for several persons who were accused of being Defenders, and were indicted for offences committed by them in the county of Lowth, one of which offenders appeared to be particularly named in the above letter. But the committee thought it their duty to state, that nothing appeared before them, which could lead them to believe that the body of the Roman Catholics in that kingdom were concerned in promoting or countenancing such disturbances, or that they were privy to that application of any part of the money, which had been levied upon them, however suspicious the conduct of ill-disposed individuals of their persuasion, resident in Dublin might have been. If all the magistrates in the disturbed counties had followed the spirited example of the few, who, much to their honor, had exerted themselves with vigor and courage to support the laws, the committee were persuaded, that these disturbances might have been suppressed; but instead of doing so, much the greater part of them remained inactive. The committee were of opinion, that the best means of restoring permanent tranquillity in the disturbed counties, would be to procure a sufficient number of active, resolute, and steady magistrates therein, who would exert themselves to maintain the public peace, and to cut off from these deluded people, all hope or expectation of support or defence arising from a common fund to be levied upon persons of their communion.

That an unusual ferment had for some months past disturbed several parts of the North, particularly the town of Belfast and the county of Antrim; it was kept up and encouraged by seditious papers and pamphlets of the most dangerous tendency, printed at very cheap and inconsiderable rates in Dublin and Belfast, which issued almost daily, from certain societies of men or clubs in both those places, calling themselves committees under various descriptions, and carrying on a constant correspondence with each other.

These

These publications were circulated amongst the people with the utmost industry, and appeared to be calculated to defame the government and parliament, and to render the people dissatisfied with their condition and with their laws. The conduct of the French was shamefully extolled, and recommended to the public view as an example for imitation; hopes and expectations had been held up of their assistance by a descent upon that kingdom, and prayers had been offered up at Belfast from the pulpit, for the success of their arms, in the presence of military associations, which had been newly levied and arrayed in that town. A body of men associated themselves in Dublin, under the title of the First National Battalion: their uniform was copied from the French, green turned up with white, white waistcoats and striped trowsers, gilt buttons, impressed with a harp and letters importing "First National Battalion," no crown, but a device over the harp of a cap of liberty upon a pike; two pattern coats had been left at two shops in Dublin. Several bodies of men had been collected in different parts of the North, armed and disciplined under officers chosen by themselves, and composed mostly of the lowest classes of the people. These bodies were daily increasing in numbers and force, they had exerted their best endeavours to procure military men of experience to act as their officers, some of them having expressly stated, that there were men enough to be had, but that officers were what they wanted. Stands of arms and gunpowder to a very large amount, much above the common consumption had been sent within the last few months to Belfast and Newry, and orders given for a much greater quantity, which it appeared could be wanted only for military operations. At Belfast, bodies of men in arms were drilled and exercised for several hours almost every night by candle-light, and attempts had been made to seduce the soldiery, which, much to the honor of the king's forces, had proved ineffectual. The declared object of these military bodies was to procure a reform of parliament; but the obvious intention of most of them appeared to be to overawe the parliament and the government, and to dictate to both. The committee forbore mentioning the names of several persons, lest it should in any manner affect any criminal prosecution, or involve the personal safety of any man who had come forward to give them information. The result of their enquiries was, that in their opinion it was incompatible with the public safety and tranquillity of that kingdom, to permit bodies of men in arms to assemble when they pleased without any legal authority: and that the
existence

existence of a self-created representative body of any description of the king's subjects taking upon itself the government of them, and levying taxes or subscriptions to be applied at the discretion of such representative body, or of persons deputed by them, was also incompatible with the public safety and tranquillity."

The Roman Catholics being sensible of the calumnies attempted to be affixed to them by their enemies, and wishing to screen themselves against the mischievous imprudence of some individuals, whose close connexions with the political societies of the North most of them condemned, agreed upon the expedient of giving the most solemn publicity to their real sentiments, by circulating through the nation a form of prayer, which was composed by several of their prelates, that happened occasionally to be then in the metropolis.*

On

* The following admonition was read on the ensuing Sunday after mass, in all the Chapels in that city; copies of it were sent all over the kingdom, the original having been composed and signed by the Reverend Dr. Troy, Dr. O'Reilly, Dr. Bray, Dr. Bellew, and Dr. Cruise, five Catholic Bishops then in Dublin, viz.

" DEAR CHRISTIANS,

Dublin, January 25, 1793.

" IT has been our constant practice, as it is our indispensable duty, to exhort
 " you to manifest on all occasions, that unshaken loyalty to his majesty, and obedience to the laws,
 " which the principles of our holy religion inspire and command. This loyalty and obedience have
 " ever peculiarly distinguished the Roman Catholics of Ireland. We do not conceive a doubt of
 " their being actuated at present by the same sentiments; but think it necessary to observe, that
 " a most lively gratitude to our beloved sovereign should render their loyalty and love of order, if
 " possible, more conspicuous. Our gracious king, the common father of all his people, has, with
 " peculiar energy, recommended his faithful Roman Catholic subjects of this kingdom to the wisdom and liberality of our enlightened parliament. How can we, dear Christians, express our
 " heartfelt acknowledgments for this signal and unprecedented instance of royal benevolence and
 " condescension! Words are insufficient; but your continued and peaceable conduct will more
 " effectually proclaim them, and in a manner equally, if not more satisfactory and pleasing to his
 " majesty and his parliament. Avoid then, we conjure you, dearest brethren, every appearance
 " of riot: attend to your industrious pursuits for the support and comfort of your families; fly
 " from idle assemblies; abstain from the intemperate use of spirituous and intoxicating liquors;
 " practise the duties of our holy religion: This conduct so pleasing to Heaven, will also prove the
 " most powerful recommendation of your present claims to our amiable sovereign, to both houses
 " of parliament, to the magistrates, and to all our well meaning fellow-subjects of every description.
 " None but the evil-minded can rejoice in your being concerned in any disturbance.

" We cannot but declare our utmost and conscientious detestation and abhorrence of the enormities

On the opening of the sessions, the lord lieutenant, after lamenting the spirit of discontent, that had manifested itself in different parts of the kingdom, after having stated the ambitious and aggressive views of France, and observed on the usual topics of recommendation on these occasions, then continued;* “ His majesty has the fullest confidence that you will, on all occasions, shew your firm determination to enforce due obedience to the laws, and to maintain the authority of government, in which you may depend upon his majesty’s cordial co-operation and support: and I have it in particular command from his majesty, to recommend it to you to apply yourselves to the consideration of such measures, as may be most likely to strengthen and cement a general union of sentiment among all classes and descriptions of his majesty’s subjects, in support of the established constitution; with this view his majesty trusts, that the situation of his majesty’s Catholic subjects will engage your serious attention, and in the consideration of this subject, he relies on the wisdom and liberality of his parliament.”

The Earl of Tyrone moved the address, and was seconded by the Honorable Mr. Wesley. Mr. John O’Neil very warmly supported the address. It gave him much pleasure to observe, that the speech recommended to the attention of parliament the situation of the Roman Catholics: the loyalty and good conduct of that people were rapidly removing the prejudices of the

“ mities lately committed by seditious and misguided wretches of every religious denomination, in some counties of this kingdom; they are enemies to God and man, the outcasts of society, and a disgrace to Christianity: We consider the Roman Catholics amongst them unworthy the appellation; whether acting from themselves, or seduced to outrage by arts of designing enemies to us, and to national prosperity, intimately connected with our emancipation.

“ Offer your prayers, dearest brethren, to the Father of Mercy, that he may inspire these deluded people with sentiments becoming Christians and good subjects; supplicate the Almighty Ruler and Disposer of empires, by whom kings rule and legislators determine what is just, to direct his majesty’s councils, and forward his benevolent intentions to unite all his Irish subjects in bonds of common interest, and common endeavours for the preservation of peace and good order, and for every purpose tending to encrease and secure national prosperity.

“ Beseech the throne of Mercy also, to assist both houses of parliament in their important deliberations; that they may be distinguished by consummate wisdom and liberality, for the advantage of the kingdom, and the relief and happiness of his majesty’s subjects.

“ Under the pleasing expectations of your cheerful compliance with these our earnest solicitations, we most sincerely wish you every blessing in this life, and everlasting happiness in the next; through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.”

* 13 Parl. Debates, p. 3.

constituent body ; and there could be no doubt, that his majesty's recommendation would have infinite weight, not only with parliament, but with all ranks of persons.

He concluded with exhorting all men, who loved the constitution, to rally round the throne, and now, in the moment of trial, manifest their wisdom and courage in defending all that was valuable ; and by the strongest expressions of affectionate attachment, shew their regard to that king, who lived in the hearts of his people. But Mr. Grattan said, our situation is certainly alarming, but by no means surprizing ; it is the necessary, natural, and obvious result of the conduct of his majesty's ministers ; the persons who had opposed our liberty in 82, were made our ministers ; afterwards the country forgave them, but they never forgave the country : they attempted to put down the constitution, and now they have put down the government. We told them so, we admonished them : we told them that their driving system would not do : we had no objection to their private characters, or their humble, natural relationships of life, but that they were absolutely, totally, radically, disqualified to govern.

Don't they remember, how in 1790, we warned them. They said we were severe. I am sure we were prophetic. In 1791, we repeated our admonition : told them that a government of clerks would not do : that a government by rank majorities would not do : that the government of the treasury would not do : that Ireland would not be long governed by the trade of parliament. We mentioned this when Lord Buckingham ran away from this kingdom, and Lord Westmoreland succeeded to his office. We told them, that a nation which had rescued her liberties from the giant of Old England, in 82, would not long bear to be trodden on by the violence of a few pignies, whom the caprice of a court had appointed ministers. He concluded a very long and animated speech by suggesting an amendment to the address. That part of it, which related to his majesty, was cold and impolitic, his interposition to heal their religious animosities was an act of distinguished wisdom, as such it should be marked particularly at a time, when attempts had been made on the thrones of princes : at such a time he would mark to the Catholics the king as the deliverer of his people. He would distinguish him from his ministers. He would mark that monarch, who had rescued his people from the hands of those ministers, that however they might abhor their proceedings, they should if necessary, unite, to rally in support of the throne, keeping

ing pure of leaning to any French politics ; or any wishes in favor of that nation, now on the eve of a war with a country, with whom they were by the crown, by the law, by interest, and by every political tie, for ever to be connected.

He then moved, an amendment, by inserting, after the word “ constitution,” the following words, “ We admire the wisdom, which at so critical a season has prompted your majesty to come forward to take a leading part in healing the animosities of your people, on account of religion : we shall take into our immediate consideration the subject graciously recommended from the throne ; and at a time when doctrines pernicious to freedom and dangerous to monarchical government are propagated in foreign countries, we shall not fail to impress your majesty’s Catholic subjects with a sense of the singular and eternal obligation they owe to the throne, and to your majesty’s royal person and family.”

After a very warm debate, Mr. Grattan withdrew his amendment, and the address was committed.

On the next day, Mr. Grattan again moved his amendment to the address, and was supported by Mr. Conolly, who called the attention of the house to that moment, as to the most awful and critical, that had ever existed. The expences, the debt of the country was great, and the corruption of the administration proportioned to both. He had always been attached to the British constitution ; and it had been the object of his whole political life to procure for the people of Ireland the full advantages of that constitution. He adored that constitution ; and while there was a drop of blood in his veins, he would stand by it, and he felt this attachment to the constitution the stronger, because he knew it carried in its vitals an antidote to any poison, that could be brought against it : particularly against the poison of corruption, of which the operation had been so strong as nearly to endanger its existence. Had the constitution been worked as it ought, if he might use that phrase, there would have been no need for those apprehensions of seditious designs expressed in the speech ; there would have been no need to fear either Jacobins or Levellers.

As to the address, every part of it had his most hearty concurrence, except one, and that was the paragraph which thanked his majesty for continuing the Earl of Westmoreland in the government of that kingdom. During the administration of that nobleman, every salutary measure that had been pro-

posed, for the good of people, had been contemptuously rejected; the expences of government had encreased, and the pension list had been augmented. He had very great affection for Lord Westmoreland in his private capacity; but for the good of the country he must wish him out of it.

A warm debate ensued, when Mr. Grattan's amendment at length passed without a division.

The peculiar singularity of the session of 1793, was the accession of government to many of the great questions, which they had successively resisted session after session, with imperious pertinacity.

On the 14th of January, Mr. W. B. Ponsonby introduced the subject of parliamentary reform, expressing his intention of submitting, at a future day, some proposal to the house for a more equal representation of the people in parliament. Mr. Conolly avowed his warmest approbation of the measure, and pledged himself to support it, whenever brought forward. In 1782, he observed, a proposition of that kind came before the house: but it came from a body of armed men sitting in the metropolis. Such a proposition from such a body, he would always think it right to resist, because the power of reforming the parliament resided in the parliament itself; on that account he then rejected the proposal. Since that period, public grievances had encreased, remedies had been in vain attempted; he would therefore recommend it to government to turn their thoughts to that one grand reform. When the house should achieve that, as he had no doubt but they would do, they would have attained the salvation of their country.

Mr. Grattan observed, that since he had been in parliament, no words ever gave him more satisfaction. He had himself intended to have brought forth the question of the reform of parliament, but did not wish to preoccupy such a question. Those are the gentlemen, who ought to lead in that great question; the men who made the sacrifices, to them belonged the laurel.

That was not the first time, in which the right honorable gentleman had made sacrifices to the country; in 1769, that gentleman, and all his connexions, were deprived of all their emoluments for supporting the privileges of that house, against an altered money bill. In 1789, they were also dismissed for defending the privileges of the two houses of parliament, against an unconstitutional and condemned viceroy; and now they advanced a third time to surrender great power, all their monopolies, and to embark in the vessel

vessel of the common-wealth, and fairly or proudly to rise or fall with the fortunes of their country.

After a long speech he moved, “that a committee be appointed to enquire “ whether any, and what abuses had taken place in the constitution of that “ country, or the administration of its government, and to report such temperate remedies, as might appear most likely to redress the same.” Mr. W. B. Ponsonby seconded the motion; and Sir John Parnell said, the motion was very wisely and temperately introduced, by denying that force should be used to extort any measure of this kind, and by asserting the exclusive right of the house to reform itself.

Mr. Corry, proposed by way of amendment, that instead of a committee to enquire into the abuses of the constitution and of the administration, a committee should be appointed to enquire into the state of the representation. Many objections were raised both against the amendment and against the original motion. But Mr. Grattan admitting the right of any member to separate the questions, added, that his original motion was to the abuses in the representation of the people, to the influence of the crown in parliament, and also, to the corruption which had taken place in the administration of its government. All ought to be reformed. But if the house wished to confine themselves to a part of his motion for the present, that is, the state of the representation, he should rejoice, that they pledged themselves so far. The amendment was finally agreed to without a division, and referred to a committee of the whole house on that day fortnight.

After so many unsuccessful attempts to bring the question of reform under the consideration of parliament from the year 1782, to that period, this referring of it to a committee was considered by the gentlemen of the opposition, as a matter of great triumph: it was an admission of the principle; it created confidence within, and afforded joy and satisfaction to the people without. In parliament, there appeared a most desirable, though novel disposition in the treasury bench to accede to proposals made for the good of the nation, even from the opposite side of the house. On the other side Mr. Forbes heartily approved of the ministers bringing forth an alien bill upon the plan of the British alien act, as a wise and necessary measure, and tending to strengthen the union with Great Britain: * and Mr. Grattan thought it more necessary

* Parl. Debates, p. 63.

there than in Great Britain : it was certainly a strong measure, but at that crisis extremely necessary. On that same day (15th January) Mr. Secretary Hobart gave notice, that he should at an early day, move the house to take into consideration, that part of the lord lieutenant's speech, where he recommended the parliament to take into consideration the situation of the Roman Catholics of that kingdom : and also, that when a committee of supply should sit, he would bring forward a measure for modifying the hearth-money tax, so as to render it less burthenfome to the poor. This conduct of administration brought forth the heartiest applauses from the opposition bench. Mr. Duquerry remarked, that ministers had done more in the first week of that session, than ever he had read of, to tranquillize the nation and restore confidence to that house. Upon Mr. Grattan's expressing his intention of bringing forward a libel bill, like that of Great Britain, Mr. Hobart avowed, that the attorney general had it also in contemplation. Leave was given to Mr. Forbes to bring in a responsibility bill and a pension bill, and to Mr. Grattan to bring in a bill for the improvement of barren land. Thus passed one week in the Irish parliament without a symptom of opposition. Every thing proposed for the good of the country, was unanimously adopted by both sides of the house. In order to give time to digest the weight of important matter before the house, they adjourned from the 15th to the 18th of January, 1793.

On the 31st of January, the house according to order took into consideration the lord lieutenant's and privy council's proclamation* of the 8th of December last, for dispersing all unlawful assemblies, when Lord Headfort

* Notwithstanding the proclamation of the 8th of December, 1792, the Goldsmith's corps paraded in Ship Street, on Sunday the 24th, but were dispersed by Alderman Warren. Mr. Stewart (of Killymoon) said, in the debate, that they were entitled to praise for dispersing at the instance of the magistrate. At the close of this debate, Lord Edward Fitzgerald, in a very vehement tone, declared, " I give my most hearty disapprobation to that address, for I do think that the lord lieutenant and the majority of this house, are the worst subjects the king has." A loud cry of " to the bar," and " take down his words" immediately echoed from every part of the house. The house was cleared in an instant, and strangers were not re-admitted for nearly three hours.

He was admitted to explain himself, and on his explaining, the house

" *Resolved nem. con.* That the excuse offered by the Right Hon. Edward Fitzgerald, commonly called Lord Edward Fitzgerald, for the said words so spoken, is unsatisfactory and insufficient : " and he was ordered to attend at the bar on the next day, when his apology was received, though not without a division upon its sufficiency : for receiving it 135, against it 66. (12 *Parl. Deb.* p. 82.)

moved

moved a resolution for an address of thanks to the lord lieutenant for the proclamation, which his excellency had issued, and for the vigilance and attention, which he had manifested, to preserve the public tranquillity; and that they applauded the wisdom of his excellency, in separating those who so laudably associated for the purposes of defending that country from foreign invasion, as well as to preserve domestic tranquillity from those, whose declared objects were tumult, disaffection, and sedition.

Mr. George Ponsonby approved of the address; at the same time he wished that a line of distinction should be made between the old volunteer corps, and any modern corps, who might make use of any disaffected emblems.

Mr. Secretary Hobart then read a summons from the Goldsmith's corps; an address from the society of United Irishmen to the volunteers of Ireland; likewise the resolutions entered into, at a meeting of delegates from several of the Dublin volunteer corps. He said, that from these resolutions, those corps came within the description and meaning of the proclamation, it was a matter of great satisfaction to him to find, that the conduct of administration in that business had met with the approbation of gentlemen on the other side of the house. It appeared to be the general sense of the house to shun a debate.

After a loud cry for the question had ceased, Mr. Grattan said he approved of the proclamation as much as he condemned the use which the minister attempted to make of it. The proclamation arraigned a certain body of men, whom it described to be an association assuming devices and emblems of disaffection. The minister applied that to the volunteers of the city and the county; and under that colour proposed to disperse them; and in order to justify that project, he produced a formal charge; viz. a summons purporting to be that of the corps of Goldsmiths, reciting that the delegates of the corps were to assemble, to celebrate the retreat of the Duke of Brunswick, and the French victory in the Low Countries, and inciting the Goldsmith's corps to attend. He did not ask, how far it were discreet to celebrate such an event, but he asked, was it a ground for dismissing the volunteers? Neither did he consider that the imitation of French style or flippery was a sufficient ground for the minister to disperse the corps, or was it such an offence as came within the description of the proclamation? The minister,

minister, himself, aware that his first charge was insufficient, had produced another. He had read a long address from a society called the United Irishmen, inviting the people of Ireland to assemble in a national convention, and containing an abundance of other matter; and he then produced a succession of resolutions from some of the corps of Dublin, one of which resolutions returns thanks to the society of United Irishmen. The minister was doing the very thing, which he wished to prevent; he was provoking a general armament; he was doing more, he was detaching that armament from parliament. In his charge against the volunteers he had mentioned a national convention. He hoped that house would, by reforming the parliament, prevent such an assembly, the consequences of which might be very unfortunate; but if the minister wished to give such an assembly an army at its back, he was taking the method, by committing that house as well as himself, with the volunteers, and attempting to detach them from the established constitution. The object of the right honorable mover, in 1779, of resolutions of thanks to the volunteers, was to attach them to the House of Commons: he thought the object was a right one. That of the minister was to detach them from the house: he thought the object was an evil one, and the manner in which the minister proceeded convicted him of imprudence. He therefore desired, in giving his approbation to the proclamation, to be distinctly understood. He approved of it, because it did propose to disperse the national guard, and because it did not propose to disperse the volunteers. The address passed unanimously.

On the 4th of February, 1793, Mr. Secretary Hobart presented to the house a petition of certain Roman Catholics bishops of Ireland and others, on behalf of themselves and their fellow subjects of the same persuasion, which was read, and ordered to lie on the table.*

Then

* 15 Com. Journ. p. 141. The petition of John Thomas Troy, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Dublin; Dominick Bellew, Roman Catholic Bishop of Killala; Richard O'Reilly, Roman Catholic Bishop of Ulster; Thomas Bray, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Cashel; Richard M'Cormick, Thomas Fitzgerald, Edward Byrne, Thomas Warren, Denis Thomas O'Brien, Valentine O'Connor, Hugh Hamill, Christopher Bellew, and several others, whose names are thereunto subscribed, on behalf of themselves and the rest of the Catholics of Ireland; setting forth, that the petitioners are subject to a variety of severe and oppressive laws, inflicting on them disabilities and disqualifications unknown to any other description of his majesty's subjects, the further continuation of which they humbly conceived their dutiful demeanour and unremitting loyalty for above one hundred years, must evince

Then Mr. Hobart said, he was aware that many of those gentlemen whom he most respected were not likely to concur in the measures he should propose; but in that point he trusted that he differed from them for the real advantage of the country. He was also aware that in the last session of parliament a petition for the very measure he should now propose had been rejected, and that he himself had voted for that rejection; but he declared that under the same circumstances, he would again vote for its rejection; it was then evident to every man that the sentiments of the country on that subject had materially altered since that time; it was well known, that at that time the opinion of the country was not ripe for such a measure. The circumstances of the present time would justify a very material alteration in the sentiments of that house. The conduct of the Roman Catholics had proved that they were perfectly attached to the constitution; and at that particular period, every man who was attached to the constitution should receive encouragement from the house. He trusted such would ever be their conduct, and such would ever be the encouragement received by men attached to the constitution.

His first object, and what the Roman Catholics seem to have most at heart, was the right of voting at elections for members of parliament; this he wished to have restored to them, and would recommend the unlimited extension of this franchise.

For that purpose it would be necessary to repeal a clause in the 1st of Geo. II. and that would extend to permitting Roman Catholics to vote in cities and towns corporate for magistrates.

The next proposition would be to repeal the 6th of Anne, so far as prohibits Papists from being grand jurors, unless there are not a sufficient number of Protestant freeholders to serve.

The next would be to repeal the 29th of George II. so far as allowing a challenge against any Papist on a petit jury, in causes where a Protestant and Papist were the parties.

evince to be equally impolitic and unnecessary; that this system of injurious exclusion had operated not less to the particular depression of the Catholics of Ireland, than to the general obstruction of the true and manifest interests of the country; the petitioners therefore humbly prayed, that the house might be pleased to take the whole of their case, into consideration, and in conformity to the benign wishes of his majesty, for the union of all his people in sentiment, affection, and interest, to restore the petitioners to the rights and privileges of the constitution of their country.

He also would propose, that his majesty might be empowered and authorized to enable the Roman Catholics to endow a college or university, and schools.

That the laws which prevented them from carrying arms, should be so far repealed as to persons possessing a certain degree of property; but by no means so as to put arms into the hands of the lower order of the people.

As to the army and navy, it was, he said, in the contemplation of the government of England, to admit Roman Catholics to bear commissions in these departments of the state; and that in due time measures for the same purpose would be proposed there, when a communication with the English government should have been had upon that point.

As to civil offices, he wished Roman Catholics might be enabled to hold them; but in that instance, he would suggest the propriety of necessary limitations.

He understood that Roman Catholics laboured still under some severities with respect to personal property; which appeared merely accidental, and to exist from inadvertence, and these he would propose to repeal. In thus endeavouring to bring forward such measures as were likely to carry into effect his majesty's recommendation to parliament, he hoped and trusted he was acting for the advantage of the country, and in conformity to that disposition, which government had manifested to meet the wishes of the people. Government had proved it by having in that session taken up the idea of relieving the lower order of people from the hearth-money tax, and it was the determination of government, in that session, to adopt such measures as would tend to promote the happiness and prosperity of the kingdom in general.

He had almost omitted a material point in his propositions, which is, that the executive government might be enabled to grant to Roman Catholics commissions of the peace.

He then moved for leave to bring in a bill for the further relief of his majesty's subjects professing the Roman Catholic religion.

The motion was seconded by Sir Hercules Langrishe: and most vehemently opposed by Dr. Duigenan, who in a very long and elaborate speech collected together whatever the acrimonious bigotry of former days had suggested against the Catholics, and retailed it with new and enthusiastic bitterness. He and Mr. Ogle were the only two upon the division, who opposed the bringing in of the bill.

On

On the 5th of February, Lord Hillsborough moved for leave, which was granted, to bring in a bill to establish a militia, which, as nearly as circumstances would permit, he would wish to form on the same plan as that of England. The whole number of men he proposed to be 16,000, upon a rough estimate 500 for each county. Mr. Grattan made some observations on the state of the country, as apparent in the public accounts. His remarks were followed by a motion “for an address to his majesty, for the better securing a reform in parliament, and for manifesting the loyalty of the people of Ireland.” This motion he introduced with a speech of considerable length; the tendency of which was to shew, that while parliament was giving government an extraordinary supply, greater than ever that house had granted, and a great addition to the army, it ought at the same time to secure to the people a reform of parliament. It had been stated, that their revenues were deficient 153,000*l.* per annum, and their expences were to be increased 100,000*l.* per annum, for the further augmentation of the army; 100,000*l.* for a contingent encampment; and, perhaps, 50,000*l.* more for a militia. All those expences to be superadded to a peace establishment, already exceeding their revenues 153,000*l.* The minister proposed a lottery, two loans, a vote of credit, and some new taxes, a great army and a militia. It was a new and a serious proposition. He wished to give the government every necessary support, and the people every constitutional redress: he considered the latter necessary to effectuate the former, because they were to combat French principles by the superiority of their constitution, as well as the superiority of their arms. But, for the better understanding his principles, he referred them to an address which he then moved: the reception it would receive, would be the test of their sincerity on the subject of reform.

“That we see with just alarm the tranquillity of these realms in danger of being disturbed by the ambition of France, connected with the propagation of principles that lead to the subversion of peace and order.

“That we feel a deep sorrow at the atrocious consequences of such criminal delusions, and an immediate interest in common with the throne to defend the faith of treaties against violation, and the settled principles of government against anarchy and plunder. The advantages we have derived under his majesty’s reign; his late gracious interposition; the passions and pride of his people, as well as their duty and interest attacked in his royal person and dignity, have induced us to seize the first moments to

“ assure his majesty of our unalterable attachment to his royal house, and of
 “ the unanimous and cordial determination of his subjects of Ireland, to stand
 “ ever by the throne, and to preserve at all times our connexion with Great
 “ Britain.

“ That we are now directing our attention to such measures, as may give
 “ his majesty’s government, at this critical juncture, every necessary and ho-
 “ norable support; and that if for such an important subject we now for a
 “ short time delay, among other business, the consideration of what we con-
 “ ceive to be the general and just wish of his majesty’s subjects, a more equal
 “ representation of the people, in the digesting of which much time may be
 “ required; we, his majesty’s faithful commons, most humbly request, that his
 “ majesty will be graciously pleased to continue the session even beyond the
 “ usual period, if necessary, in order to give his faithful commons full time,
 “ this present session, to apply their faculty and industry to mature and com-
 “ plete so important a business as a reform of parliament, that by giving his
 “ majesty’s subjects, pursuant to the gracious recommendation from the
 “ throne, every reason to be satisfied; and by giving his government every
 “ necessary strength, we may more effectually unite in support of the king
 “ and constitution.”

The Chancellor of the Exchequer objected to the address, as combining subjects not naturally connected.

The 9th of February, 1793, proved a considerable check upon the confidence which the opposition had during the first week of the session, placed in the sincerity of administration. According to order, the house resolved itself into a committee to enquire into the state of the representation of the people in parliament. When *Mr. Grattan, who took the lead on this question, opened a very interesting speech, with the observation, that a more important question was never agitated in parliament. In 1782, the question was, “ Whether Ireland should be governed by the parliament of another country:” the present was, “ Whether she should enjoy a parliament of her own. “ As the subject of parliamentary reform was then posted, it was impossible for government to retreat from it. Their declaration on the 4th day of the session, the words of the lord-lieutenant’s secretary, the liberal grants of the house had established the necessity of acceding to a reform in parliament, and had sealed the doom of every rotten borough in the kingdom. Whence

* 13 Parl. Debates.

he collected two inferences; that the parliament would be reformed, and that the reform would take place that session. In this confidence he moved the three following resolutions: 1st. "That the representation of the people is attended with great and heavy charges and payments, in consequence of elections and returns of members to serve in parliament, and that said abuses ought to be abolished. 2dly. That of the three hundred members elected to serve in parliament, the counties, and counties of cities and towns, together with the university, return eighty-four members; and that the remaining two hundred and sixteen are returned by boroughs and manors. 3dly. That the state of the representation of the people in parliament requires amendment." Upon the first of these having been moved, the chancellor of the exchequer objected to it, on account of the danger of teaching the public to despise the present system before a better was provided. He did not mean to oppose a parliamentary reform; but to prevent premature and unnecessary decision. The wise way would be to produce a system of reform, by it to remove the existing defects, not to libel them. He cautioned gentlemen against appealing from that house to the public; and moved, as an amendment, the following resolutions:—"That under the present system of representation, the privileges of the people, the trade and the prosperity of the country, have greatly increased; and that if any plan be produced likely to increase those advantages, and not hazard what we already possess, it ought to be taken into the most serious consideration."

Mr. Forbes objected to the amendment, as it was unparliamentary to move as an amendment, what went entirely to supercede the original motion. A very warm debate ensued, which, on the part of government, was evidently aimed at checking and damping the progress of the great question of reform, to which they never cordially acceded. At the close of the debate, Mr. Hobart begged to be understood as having given no opinion regarding the question of reform, but was against any resolution which reflected on parliament: he therefore recommended to the chairman to report progress, and beg leave to sit again. Mr. Grattan, in reply, lamented what the right honorable gentleman had said: it damped his joy, but should not slacken his efforts.*

The

* In a conversation on the 15th of February, about the Catholic bill's taking the precedence of the question of reform, Mr. Grattan (13 Parl. Debates, p. 195) thus spoke:—"Let me assure his

The house divided: for the amendment 153, against it 71. Thenceforth was revived the old system of opposition, and the hope of a coalition in the great national question became evanescent.

On the next day Mr. Hobart informed the house, that he was directed by his excellency to deliver the following message :

“ WESTMORELAND.

“ I HAVE his majesty’s commands to acquaint the House of Commons, that the assembly now exercising the powers of government in France, have, without previous notice, directed acts of hostility to be committed against the persons and property of his majesty’s subjects, in breach of the law of nations, and of the most positive stipulations of treaty ; and have since, on the most groundless pretences, actually declared war against his majesty, and the United Provinces. Under the circumstances of this wanton and unprovoked aggression, his majesty has taken the necessary steps to maintain the honor of his crown, and to vindicate the rights of his people : and his majesty relies with confidence on the firm and effectual support of the House of Commons, and on the zealous exertions of a brave and loyal people, in prosecuting a just and necessary war ; and in endeavouring, under the blessing of Providence, to oppose an effectual barrier to the further progress of a system, which strikes at the security and peace of all independent nations, and is pursued in open defiance of every principle of moderation, good faith, humanity, and justice.

“ In a cause of such general concern, his majesty has every reason to hope for the cordial co-operation of those powers who are united with his majesty by the ties of alliance, or who feel an interest in preventing the exten-

“ majesty’s ministers and this house, that if they propose to maintain in this country a particle of authority, they must accede to a redress of grievances. The nation begins to doubt the sincerity of those ministers. I know on our side every thing is sincere : I apprehend it is not so on their’s . We found in the question of Monday a change in their language and their conduct ; but we tell them it is in vain to trifle with the country ; you are now in a situation, in which it may be necessary to call out the exertions of the nation for its defence : you never will command those exertions until you agree to redress her grievances, and to reform her representation, which is one of them. My friend has now introduced two bills, a pension bill, and a responsibility bill. He introduces his place bill I believe to-morrow. Two of those bills constitute the internal part of the reform of parliament : we will debate them the next week, and put the question to his majesty’s ministers, whether they are friends or enemies to the reform, that the nation may know what she is to expect from them.”

“ sion —

“ fion of anarchy and confufion, and contributing to the fecurity and tranquillity of Europe.”

Addrefſes for this meſſage to his majeſty and the lord-lieutenant, were immediately voted. When Mr. Hobart, on the 16th of February, preſented the Roman Catholic bill to the houſe: he made no comments upon it, but only moved, that it ſhould be read a ſecond time on the following Friday. Some few members oppoſed the motion, though it paſſed without a diviſion. Sir Lawrence Parſons ſpoke very much at large againſt it; as did alſo Dr. Duigenan, though not ſo diffuſely as on the preſentation of the petition.

Although the houſe had adopted the principle of reform, by going into a committee upon the queſtion, yet their ſincerity in adopting it was highly queſtionable, from the oppoſition the majority of them gave to every preliminary meaſure, which tended to forward it. Mr. Forbes, on the 19th of February, moved, “ That the clerks of the peace, and other returning officers in the ſeveral boroughs throughout the kingdom, do lay before this houſe, on or before this day fortnight, liſts of the electors in their reſpective boroughs, with the reſpective qualifications, on which they exerciſed the elective franchise.”

Moderate and neceſſary as ſuch a ſtep appeared to the friends of reform, it was reſiſted with all the force of government, and loſt by a diviſion of 137 againſt 48.* The addreſs of Mr. Grattan in this debate to the government, after

* As this debate produced a warm perſonal altercation between Mr. Corry and Mr. G. Ponſonby; and as both theſe gentlemen were leading men in their reſpective parties, it will throw ſome light upon the views and motives of the government and oppoſition of thoſe days, to expoſe to the judgment of the unbiassed reader the reciprocal attacks of ſuch men upon each other. Mr. G. Ponſonby had obſerved, that the committee had been moved for by a gentleman, a friend of government; and he could not help taking notice, that from the moment he made the motion, that gentleman had never taken one ſtep in the committee of his own appointing; never had opened his mouth; never had uttered one ſyllable. What then could the public think of parliamentary reform, or of that gentleman's ſincerity, when they ſaw that the committee moved by him was merely a pit, into which it was intended parliamentary reform ſhould fall and be ſmothered? But miniſters will find they have deceived themſelves in this, as upon other occaſions, where they acted with the ſame art and duplicity; they may be aſſured they will not ſo eaſily get rid of the ſubject, for we will follow it up from day to day, and from year to year, and never be deterred until we have ſucceeded.

Mr. Corry felt himſelf ſo perſonally called upon, that he ſhould think himſelf wanting in reſpect to

after a long speech, was too remarkable to be omitted. "You say to us, (addressing himself to the treasury bench), do not enquire into particular facts,

to the house, were he not to state his conduct to them. A right honorable gentleman having given notice, that he intended to move for leave to bring in a bill for a parliamentary reform; and the same evening a motion having been made for "a committee to enquire into the abuses in the commons representation;" that motion falling immediately upon the speech on the subject of reform, did not appear to them very well calculated to attain the end it pretended to pursue. He had always been a friend to parliamentary reform; many years ago he took it up; he liked it upon principles, and was pledged to the measure: the motion was an attack upon government; it was likely to defeat the measure, and therefore he thought it highly objectionable. Having voted both nights with the honorable gentleman, he could only say, that he was sorry he had given two votes on questions so trifling, introduced upon a subject, which ought to have been taken on a greater scale.

He then asked, which acted with more sincerity, the honorable gentleman, who voted for the committee against his judgment; or he who endeavoured to make the committee as much as possible effectual? Did he talk of sincerity, whose life had been one tissue of insincerity? Did he talk of sincerity? He would talk with him on that theme until the blood should rush back to his heart affrighted from his countenance. Did he talk of sincerity? Why, sir, if insincerity were to be personified, it would take the shape of the honorable gentleman.

Let not then the gentleman who had given the most unqualified and unlimited support to every measure of every administration that would trust him, pretend to character; he never would recover character in that country.

Mr. Ponsonby said, I with the honorable gentleman had gone on as he asserted he might, to animadvert on my conduct, he had no reason to stop. I am able to defend myself against his ability, and against his malevolence. His first charge is, that I voted against a parliamentary reform: I did, sir: I voted against it, when an armed convention introduced it to the House of Commons on the point of the bayonet; and would again oppose it, if brought forward in the same manner. I did so, because I had spirit enough to do what he would not venture to attempt. He says, that I was degraded: the charge is false. I spurned the despicable administration of Lord Buckingham, which he supported: and though I might have returned with increased influence, I rejected them with abhorrence and contempt. So much for the truth of the honorable gentleman.

He says, I voted against a pension bill: I did so, and would do so again, if it were not coupled with a responsibility bill, and other measures which the country demands. He says, the public do not give me their confidence: Sir, I am not vain enough to say they do; but I will give them such proofs, that whatever confidence they may have in my motives, they will be convinced by my actions that I am their friend.

We, sir, who act on this side of the house, are not afraid of the aspersions, that are thrown upon us as men combined to force ourselves into power, while we see ministers every now and then taking up one of our measures, in order to conciliate the people: they take great credit to themselves for reducing the hearth-money, which was our measure; for a barren land-bill, which was our measure. What drives them to this? Their want of character. And thus they will proceed; and when they have adopted our measures one by one, they will then vaunt their popularity, and cry, Lord, what an upright administration we are!

but

but go at once to the great principle; that very principle, which you resisted but the other night. What are we to infer from this conduct? But that you are insincere on the subject of parliamentary reform? But I must say, in no case would your insincerity be so mischievous both to yourselves and to the nation. The credit which you took to yourselves for favoring this object early in the session has rendered your retreat not only dangerous, but impossible; by urging public expectation to the very utmost, in order to court popularity, you have become more mischievous than those, whom you call insurgents.

He went into a recital of charges against administration. He was sorry to be betrayed, he said, into personality, or particular accusation; he was grown too old for those things, but he must vindicate himself from the charge of embarrassing government wantonly, and he declared, that if they supported this measure warmly and decidedly, he would serve them, though he never would act with them, he would vote with them unplaced, unpensioned, and unofficed, if they conceded his favourite object to the wishes of the people.

On the 22d of February, 1793, the Catholic bill was read a second time, and produced a very warm and interesting debate. Most of the speeches on this memorable occasion were in favor of the bill. Mr. G. Ponsonby and Mr. D. La Touche spoke against it. On a question of so much importance to the nation, and concerning which deeply rooted prejudices had grown up with most of the members from the dawn of their intellects, it was to be expected, that those, who were the most sincere in their former convictions, should be the most reluctantly brought to abandon their early prejudices. The general change of opinion in the House of Commons, upon the full notification of the will of the castle, and consequently of the British cabinet, more irrefragably than any other argument proved the ductile quality of that house to every dictate of the power, to which they had vowed unqualified obedience. Some few independent members beyond the reach of that didactic sway disdained to subject their opinions to the suggestions or commands of a British minister. They spoke firmly and resolutely upon the question; they drew forth from Mr. Hobart (the oracle and index of the British cabinet) a species of apology for them, which illustrates to demonstration the tenure of submission and concurrence, by which the majority of that house held their seats and influence. It had (he said) been truly

*truly stated, that no man had a right to argue, that a subject debated in that house was supposed to be influenced by the command of his majesty; his majesty in his good pleasure might recommend a subject to the consideration of parliament: parliament in their duty and affection would give the most respectful and attentive consideration to what his majesty recommended to their notice; but when the measure came before parliament in the shape of a bill, it then was the measure of the member, who introduced it, and his majesty's name was no longer to be used in its support; and therefore the gentleman who spoke early in the debate was not justified in saying, this bill was by his majesty's command.

He agreed also with the honorable gentleman, that his majesty had recommended to them the care of the Protestant establishment, and that it was their duty to guard it from injury; and therefore the question was, how far could they go in behalf of the Roman Catholics without shaking the security of the Protestant establishment? On that question he had consulted with some of the most experienced and best informed men in the country, and it did appear to them, that the measure now offered would give effectual relief to the Roman Catholics, without shaking the Protestant establishment; the Roman Catholics themselves felt it so; and he was convinced it would not injure the Protestant. Though he differed from some gentlemen, for whom he entertained the highest regard, he knew that what they were doing would essentially serve the country; it would conciliate the Roman Catholics, it would cement a common union of interest and affection amongst his majesty's subjects, and enable that country to repel all her enemies.

After a very interesting and warm, though not intemperate, debate, the question was carried in the affirmative, against only one negative: and the bill was committed for the Monday following with three negatives. Of all the parliamentary friends to Catholic emancipation, Mr. Grattan† was the
most

* 13 Par. Deb. p. 271-2.

* That gentleman seldom failed to add to the stupendous powers of his oratory much historical illustration upon every subject, which he took in hand. Alluding to an objection, that had been raised against the Irish brigade being constantly recruited and officered from Ireland: he said, the fact was not so. The Irish brigade was not constantly recruited and officered from Ireland, but on the contrary few of its officers, and very few of its men, were recruited from Ireland. Gentlemen would distinguish between officers of Irish families and of Irish birth, and they would distinguish
also

most consistent, zealous, and persevering. His sentiments swayed many opinions in the nation; they also created discontent and opposition in another part of the community. He wished the bill under their consideration had gone further. He could wish that it had given the Roman Catholics the privileges of other Dissenters. Sure, he was, that was the only sound policy. He thought however the bill deserved thanks, because it contained much, and also because it led to much more; but the mover would have discovered more sense, if he had then given to the Catholics the whole, and had settled with them for ever.

When the Catholic bill was in the committee, so far had ancient prejudices and prepossessions given way to the royal recommendation of humanity and justice towards three millions of loyal subjects, that Mr. George Knox after

also between a regiment bearing an Irish name, and a regiment filled with Irishmen. The first was the case of the Irish brigade, the latter was not; for the refutation of that part of the objection, he appealed to the knowledge and the candour of gentlemen, who had seen service, and who must know the charge, that the Irish brigade was constantly officered and recruited from Ireland, to be absolutely destitute of foundation. The objection proceeded and stated, that 16,000 Irish Catholics fought against Great Britain in the American war. He believed the number of those Irish to be greatly magnified, and sure he was that description was not just; those Irish were great in numbers. Presbyterians of the North, not Catholics of the South; they emigrated in great bodies, and they continued even then to emigrate to America from the North of Ireland, not for rebellion, but for land, or a better condition. Their fellow subjects had emigrated from poverty at home, and sometimes had met war; and if they wished never to meet them in arms in other countries, their method should have been to give them a better condition at home. The objection proceeded, and stated, that great bodies of Irish fought against England at St. Eustatia and St. Lucia; here again the objection failed in point of fact; great bodies of Irishmen did not fight against England at St. Eustatia and St. Lucia. There was indeed a regiment of 1800 commanded by General Dillon, the Irish brigade, and that he supposed the objector conceived to have been those great bodies of Irishmen; but that regiment was chiefly composed of Dutch, and of the recruits of various nations, and of very few Irish; here again he appealed to the gentlemen in the service, whether that part of the objection was not, like the other parts, entirely unfounded. The objection proceeded and stated, that the Irish Catholics supplied the fleets and armies of the enemies in a much greater proportion than those of Great Britain; that he positively denied. They supplied the fleets and armies of the enemy in a very trifling proportion, and they supplied the fleets and armies of Great Britain in a very great and abundant proportion. In the last war, of 80,000 seamen, 50,000 were Irish names; in Chelsea, near one third of the pensioners were Irish names; in some of the men of war almost the whole complement of men were Irish. With respect to the recruiting service, it was a fact known to the gentlemen of the army, that since they had recruited for the foot in Ireland, the regiments had been filled in a great proportion with Irish Catholics.

a most liberal and able speech moved, that the committee might be empowered to receive a clause to admit Roman Catholics to sit and vote in the House of Commons. Major Doyle seconded the motion, which was strongly supported by Mr. Daly, Col. Hutchinson, Mr. M. Smith, Mr. John O'Neile, Mr. Hardy and some other gentlemen friendly to Catholic emancipation; it was however rejected upon a division by 163 against 69. When the Catholic bill had passed its second reading in the lords, the Bishop of Killala (Dr. Law, the brother of Lord Ellinborough) expressed his ready and most cheerful assent to a bill for the relief of his long oppressed and loyal Catholic brethren, and their return to that portion of the constitution, to which the bill before the house went to admit them. His lordship went into an history of the origin and progress of the penal statutes, and deprecated the whole system, as founded in the prejudices of a bigoted and persecuting age, and continued for near a century with equal impolicy and injustice to a loyal body of subjects, whose conduct for that period was a full refutation of every argument that could be offered in support of that code, under which they had so long groaned with patient submission. In times like the present, when threatened by foreign enemies, and agitated by domestic dissensions, he wished to unite the great mass of the country in support of that constitution, to which they had ever been loyal, rather than turn them against it by perpetuating restrictive systems and oppressive exclusions, which no existing necessity could warrant, no policy approve.

He felt it his duty to declare fully his sentiments on these points, because he looked upon his Roman Catholic brethren as fellow subjects, and fellow Christians, believers in the same God, and partners in the same redemption. Speculative differences in some points of faith from him were of no account; they and he had but one religion—the religion of Christianity. Therefore, as children of the same father—as travellers in the same road—and seekers of the same salvation, why not love each other as brothers? It was no part of Protestantism to persecute Catholics, and without justice to the Catholic, there could be no security for the Protestant establishment; as a friend, therefore, to the permanency of that establishment, to the prosperity of the country, and the justice due to his Catholic brethren, he should cheerfully give his vote that the bill be committed.

The Earl of Glandore and the Marquis of Waterford spoke very warmly upon the subject. Lord Portarlington observed, much to the credit of the Catholic

Catholic body, and somewhat against the tendency of certain parts of the lords' report upon the late disturbances, that he was one of the committee lately appointed by their lordships to enquire into certain alarming events of late prevalent in that country, and if he were not fully convinced, that the Catholic body had no concern whatever in the disturbances created by some of their communion in the north, he should never give to this bill the support he then meant by voting cheerfully for its committal.

The lord chancellor declared his most earnest wish was, to have made no opposition to the bill, to have let it pass without any observation, as the state of the country seemed to render it absolutely necessary; but when the general principles of anarchy, the rage of innovation, and the epidemical phrenzy seemed to have reached that house; when inflammatory declamation, and ill-advised misstatements came from the reverend bench, it attached upon the existing government, and he felt it necessary to rise in defence of the constitution. Before he alluded more particularly to the right reverend prelate, he must assume the office of his apologist, and the apology he had to offer for him, was an utter and radical ignorance of the laws and constitution of the country, from whence he came, and the laws and constitution of the country, in which he lived. Then after having disclaimed any personal bigotry or acrimony, he entered into a wide field of justification of the whole penal code on the score of temporary necessity, and enlarged upon the pernicious tendency of Catholic tenets, as even recently defended by their primate Doctor Troy. He concluded a very long and elaborate speech with a reflection, which gives strong room to believe, that the committee of the lords received that tint of crimination, which is so visible in it from his lordship's influence and suggestions. He mentioned the powers assumed by the Popish convention, of levying taxes upon their community for defraying the expences of their claims and proceedings, which, were they fair, just and open, required no such support. He wished to resist further innovation; he foresaw, in granting more than the present bill gave, a total separation from England, or an union with her---each to be equally dreaded.

The archbishop of Cashel delivered a virulent Philippic against the Catholics; and was particularly severe upon the bishop of Killala for having extended his liberality towards them, beyond what became a Protestant prelate. Several of the clauses were debated in the progress of the bill: but

the debate, which took place upon that clause, which enabled Catholics to accept military employments, calls most upon our attention.

Lord Farnham, in a speech of some extent, argued, that until a law similar to the present, was passed in England, Catholic officers could not attend their regiments, if ordered on duty into England. His lordship was, therefore, for amending the clause, by wording it so, as that a Roman Catholic should not be eligible to a military commission in Ireland, until the principle were adopted by a similar law of England, which would render the brave and loyal Catholic eligible to military service in any part of the British empire, wherever exigency might call him.

The lord chancellor opposed the principle of this amendment, the clause merely went to enable the Catholics to accept a military employment; but it could not be supposed his majesty would appoint a man to such a post, until the laws of the empire should fully qualify him to act in every part of it. It was more than probable, a similar law to this would be adopted in England, before the lapse of two months, and on this ground the amendment would be wholly unnecessary. The Duke of Leinster opposed the amendment as unnecessary, and wished to raise the bravery and prowess of the Irish Catholic, attached to the service of his country. Lord Bellamont supported the amendment, as tending to accelerate a law in England, similar to the present. After some further debate, the amendment was withdrawn.

Ten years have elapsed since the chancellor's supposition of a similar law being passed in England. None such has yet passed: but the incorporate union of the kingdoms must necessarily disclose to every thinking mind, the necessity of some imperial regulation of the army and navy of Great Britain.*

It

* Incredible as it may appear, that during the course of the last war upwards of 270,000 men were recruited from Ireland to serve his majesty in the navy and the army, the wonder will increase, when it is known, that by 1 Geo. I. c. 13. s. 1. every person who shall receive pay, salary, fee or wages in the service or employment of his majesty must take and subscribe the oaths of supremacy and abjuration within three months from entering into such capacity. By section viii, every such person neglecting and refusing so to do, is disabled from thenceforth to sue or use any action, bill, plaint, or information in any court of law, or to prosecute any suit in any court of equity, or to be guardian of any child, or executor or administrator of any person, or capable of any legacy or deed of gift, or to be in any office within the realm of Great Britain, or to vote at any election for members to serve in parliament, and shall forfeit the sum of 500*l.* to be recovered by him or them, that shall sue for the same. And to shew, that this civil death is intended to be inflicted

It is impossible to expect, that the British navy and army should be fairly and cordially recruited from that fertile nursery of sailors and soldiers, whilst the British act subsists, which renders it illegal and penal even for a common soldier or sailor professing the Roman Catholic religion, to serve his country in either of those capacities.

The passing of the Roman Catholic bill in this session was a matter of the most serious importance to the political existence of that kingdom.* It was undoubtedly

inflicted upon common soldiers and sailors as well as officers, section xxx especially enables his majesty to grant commissions under the great seal to such person or persons, as to his majesty shall seem meet, to empower him and them to administer these oaths to seamen and private soldiers, and seamen and soldiers are thereby enjoined and required to take the same, upon the pains and penalties in the act mentioned, in case of refusal thereof: and section xxxi provides, that no seaman or soldier, under the degree of a commission or warrant officer, shall be obliged to pay any fee or reward on taking the said oaths. Serious doubts must have arisen upon the operation of this act of Geo. I. in Ireland: some doubt may be entertained, whether the words of the Irish statute enabling Catholics to enjoy civil and military offices, or places of trust or profit under his majesty in that kingdom, repealed the act of Geo. I. as to seamen or common soldiers in Ireland: certainly the Irish act could not screen a seaman or soldier from the penalties of the British act, from the moment he quitted the jurisdiction of the late parliament of Ireland.

* By this act the present state of the Roman Catholics of Ireland is settled. The vague term of Catholic emancipation was used before the passing of this act: it has survived it. Every man appears to annex his own meaning to it. I submit to the view of the reader the form of the act, that he may fairly judge of the civil freedom, which the Irish Catholic now enjoys, and that which he is deprived of.

“ 33 Geo. III. c. xxi.

“ *An Act for the Relief of His Majesty's Popish or Roman Catholic Subjects of Ireland.*

“ WHEREAS various acts of parliament have been passed, imposing on his majesty's subjects
 “ professing the Roman Catholic religion, many restraints and disabilities, to which other subjects
 “ of this realm are not liable; and from the peaceable and loyal demeanor of his majesty's Popish
 “ or Roman Catholic subjects, it is fit that such restraints and disabilities shall be discontinued:
 “ Be it therefore enacted, by the king's most excellent majesty, by and with the advice and consent
 “ of the lords spiritual and temporal, and commons in this present parliament assembled, and by
 “ the authority of the same, That his majesty's subjects, being Papists, or persons professing the
 “ Popish or Roman Catholic religion, or married to Papists or persons professing the Popish or Ro-
 “ man Catholic religion, or educating any of their children in that religion, shall not be liable or
 “ subject to any penalties, forfeitures, disabilities, or incapacities, or to any laws for the limitation,
 “ charging, or discovering of their estates and property, real or personal, or touching the acquiring
 “ of property or securities effecting property; save such as his majesty's subjects of the Protestant
 “ religion are liable and subject to; and that such parts of all oaths as are required to be taken by
 “ persons in order to qualify themselves for voting at elections of members to serve in parliament;

“ and

undoubtedly a vast accession of benefit to that body, whether it were to be called indulgence, concession, or recognition of right. Considering the long series

“ and also such parts of all oaths required to be taken by persons voting at elections for members
 “ to serve in parliament, as import to deny that the person taking the same is a Papist or married
 “ to a Papist, or educates his children in the Popish religion, shall not hereafter be required to be
 “ taken by any voter, but shall be omitted by the person administering the same; and that it shall
 “ not be necessary, in order to entitle a Papist, or person professing the Popish or Roman Catholic
 “ religion to vote at an election of members to serve in parliament, that he should at, or previous
 “ to his voting, take the oaths of allegiance and abjuration, any statute now in force to the contrary
 “ of any of the said matters in any wise notwithstanding.

“ II. Provided always, and be it further enacted, That all Papists or persons professing the
 “ Popish, or Roman Catholic religion, who may claim to have a right of voting for members to
 “ serve in parliament, or of voting for magistrates in any city, town corporate, or borough, within
 “ this kingdom, be hereby required to perform all qualifications, registries, and other requisites,
 “ which are now required of his majesty's Protestant subjects, in like cases, by any law or laws
 “ now of force in this kingdom, save and except such oaths and parts of oaths as are herein before
 “ excepted.

“ III. And provided always, That nothing hereinbefore contained shall extend, or be construed
 “ to extend to repeal, or alter any law or act of parliament now in force, by which certain qualifi-
 “ cations are required to be performed by persons enjoying any offices or places of trust under his
 “ majesty, his heirs and successors, other than as herein after is enacted.

“ IV. Provided also, That nothing herein contained, shall extend, or be construed to extend to
 “ give Papists, or persons professing the Popish religion, a right to vote at any parish vestry, for
 “ levying of money to rebuild or repair any parish church, or respecting the demising or disposal
 “ of the income of any estate belonging to any church or parish, or for the salary of the parish
 “ clerk, or at the election of any church-warden.

“ V. Provided always, That nothing contained in this act shall extend to, or be construed to
 “ affect any action or suit now depending, which shall have been brought or instituted previous to
 “ the commencement of this session of parliament.

“ VI. Provided also, That nothing herein contained, shall extend to authorize any Papist, or
 “ person professing the Popish or Roman Catholic religion, to have or keep in his hands or pos-
 “ session, any arms, armour, ammunition, or any warlike stores, sword-blades, barrels, locks, or
 “ stocks of guns, or fire arms, or to exempt such person from any forfeiture, or penalty inflicted by
 “ any act respecting arms, armour, or ammunition, in the hands or possession of any Papist, or
 “ respecting Papists having or keeping such warlike stores, save and except Papists, or persons of
 “ the Roman Catholic religion, seized of a freehold estate of one hundred pounds a year, or pos-
 “ sessed of a personal estate of one thousand pounds or upwards, who are hereby authorized to keep
 “ arms and ammunition as Protestants now by law may; and also, save and except Papists or
 “ Roman Catholics possessing a freehold estate of ten pounds yearly value, and less than one hun-
 “ dred pounds, or a personal estate of three hundred, and less than one thousand pounds, who shall
 “ have at the session of the peace in the county in which they reside, taken the oath of allegiance
 “ preferred

series of oppression and bondage which they had groaned under, the happiness of their delivery was in a peculiar manner owing to the parental tenderness

“ prescribed to be taken by an act passed in the thirteenth and fourteenth years of his present majesty’s reign, entitled, *An Act to enable His Majesty’s Subjects, of whatever Persuasion, to testify their Allegiance to him*; and also in open court, swear and subscribe an affidavit, that they are possessed of a freehold estate, yielding a clear yearly profit to the person making the same, of ten pounds, or a personal property of three hundred pounds above his just debts, specifying therein the name and nature of such freehold, and nature of such personal property, which affidavits shall be carefully preserved by the clerk of the peace, who shall have for his trouble a fee of sixpence, and no more, for every such affidavit; and the person making such affidavits, and possessing such property, may keep and use arms and ammunition as Protestants may, so long as they shall respectively possess a property of the annual value of ten pounds, and upwards, if freehold, or the value of three hundred pounds if personal, any statute to the contrary notwithstanding.

“ VII. And be it enacted, That it shall and may be lawful for Papists, or persons professing the Popish or Roman Catholic religion, to hold, exercise, and enjoy all civil and military offices, or places of trust or profit under his majesty, his heirs, and successors, in this kingdom; and to hold or take degrees, or any professorship in, or be masters, or fellows of any college, to be hereafter founded in this kingdom, provided that such college shall be a member of the University of Dublin, and shall not be founded exclusively for the education of Papists, or persons professing the Popish or Roman Catholic religion, nor consist exclusively of masters, fellows, or other persons to be named or elected on the foundation of such college, being persons professing the Popish or Roman Catholic religion, or to hold any office or place of trust in, and to be a member of any lay-body corporate, except the college of the holy and undivided Trinity of Queen Elizabeth, near Dublin, without taking and subscribing the oath of allegiance, supremacy, or abjuration, or making or subscribing the declaration required to be taken, made, and subscribed, to enable any such person to hold and enjoy any of such places, and without receiving the sacrament of the Lord’s supper, according to the rights and ceremonies of the Church of Ireland, any law, statute, or by-law of any corporation to the contrary notwithstanding; provided that every such person shall take and subscribe the oath appointed by the said act passed in the thirteenth and fourteenth years of his majesty’s reign, entitled, *An Act to enable His Majesty’s Subjects, of whatever persuasion, to testify their Allegiance to him*; and also the oath and declaration following, that is to say:

“ I A. B. do hereby declare, that I do profess the Roman Catholic religion. I A. B. do swear, that I do abjure, condemn, and detest, as unchristian and impious, the principle that it is lawful to murder, destroy, or any ways injure any person whatsoever, for, or under the pretence of being an heretic; and I do declare solemnly before God, that I believe, that no act in itself unjust, immoral, or wicked, can ever be justified or excused by, or under pretence, or colour, that it was done either for the good of the church, or in obedience to any ecclesiastical power whatsoever. I also declare, that it is not an article of the Catholic faith, neither am I thereby required to believe or profess, that the Pope is infallible, or that I am bound to obey any order in its own nature

“ im

ness of his majesty to his Irish Catholic subjects, whom he thus relieved, as it were in defiance of the bigotry and cruelty of their own countrymen. This great

“ immoral, though the Pope or any ecclesiastical power should issue or direct such order, but, on
 “ the contrary, I hold, that it would be sinful in me to pay any respect or obedience thereto; I fur-
 “ ther declare, that I do not believe that any sin whatsoever committed by me can be forgiven at
 “ the mere will of any Pope, or any priest, or of any person whatsoever; but that sincere sorrow
 “ for past sins, a firm and sincere resolution to avoid future guilt, and to atone to God, are previous
 “ and indispensable requisites to establish a well-founded expectation of forgiveness, and that any
 “ person, who receives absolution without these previous requisites, so far from obtaining thereby
 “ any remission of his sins incurs the additional guilt of violating a sacrament; and I do swear,
 “ that I will defend to the utmost of my power the settlement and arrangement of property in this
 “ country as established by the laws now in being; I do hereby disclaim, disavow, and solemnly
 “ abjure any intention to subvert the present church establishment for the purpose of substituting
 “ a Catholic establishment in its stead; and I do solemnly swear, that I will not exercise any
 “ privilege, to which I am or may become entitled, to disturb and weaken the Protestant religion
 “ and Protestant government in this kingdom. So help me God.

“ VIII. And be it enacted, That Papists, or persons professing the Popish or Roman Catholic
 “ religion, may be capable of being elected professors of medicine, upon the foundation of Sir Patriek
 “ Dunn, any law or statute to the contrary notwithstanding.

“ IX. Provided always, and be it enacted, That nothing herein contained shall extend, or be
 “ construed to extend to enable any person to sit or vote in either house of parliament, or to hold,
 “ exercise, or enjoy the office of lord lieutenant, lord deputy, or other chief governor or governors
 “ of this kingdom, lord high chancellor or keeper, or commissioner of the great seal of this king-
 “ dom, lord high treasurer, chancellor of the Exchequer, chief justice of the Court of King's Bench,
 “ or Common Pleas, lord chief baron of the Court of Exchequer, justice of the Court of King's
 “ Bench or Common Pleas, or baron of the Court of Exchequer, judge of the High Court of Ad-
 “ miralty, master or keeper of the Rolls, secretary of state, keeper of the privy seal, vice-treasurer,
 “ or deputy vice-treasurer, teller and cashier of the Exchequer, or auditor-general, lieutenant or
 “ governor, or custos rotulorum of counties, secretary to the lord lieutenant, lord deputy, or other
 “ chief governor or governors of this kingdom, member of his majesty's most honorable privy
 “ council, prime serjeant, attorney-general, solicitor-general, second and third serjeants at law, or
 “ king's council, masters in chancery, provost, or fellow of the college of the holy undivided
 “ Trinity of Queen Elizabeth, near Dublin; post-master-general, master, and lieutenant-general
 “ of his majesty's ordnance, commander in chief of his majesty's forces, generals on the staff, and
 “ sheriffs, and sub-sheriffs of any county in this kingdom; or any office contrary to the rules,
 “ orders and directions made and established by the lord lieutenant and council in pursuance of the
 “ act passed in the seventeenth and eighteenth years of King Charles the Second, entitled, An Act
 “ for the explaining of some doubts arising upon an act, entitled, An Act for the better Execution
 “ of his Majesty's gracious Declaration for the Settlement of this Kingdom of Ireland, and Satis-
 “ faction of the several Interests of Adventurers, Soldiers, and other his Subjects there, and for
 “ making

great act of national justice and policy was wrung from the Irish parliament by the irresistible power of royal benevolence and liberality. Few indeed were

“ making some Alterations of, and Additions unto the said Act, for the more speedy and effectual
 “ Settlement of this Kingdom, unless he shall have taken, made, and subscribed the Oaths and
 “ Declarations, and performed the several Requisites, which by any law heretofore made, and now
 “ of force, are required to enable any Person to sit or vote, or to hold, exercise, and enjoy the said
 “ offices respectively.

“ X. Provided also, and be it enacted, That nothing in this act contained shall enable any
 “ Papist, or person professing the Popish or Roman Catholic religion, to exercise any right of pre-
 “ sentation to any ecclesiastical benefice whatsoever.

“ XI. And be it enacted, That no Papist, or person professing the Popish or Roman Catholic
 “ religion, shall be liable or subject to any penalty for not attending Divine service on the Sabbath-
 “ Day, called Sunday, in his or her parish church.

“ XII. Provided also, and be it enacted, That nothing herein contained, shall be construed to
 “ extend to authorize any Popish priest, or reputed Popish priest, to celebrate marriage between
 “ Protestant and Protestant, or between any person, who hath been or professed himself or herself
 “ to be a Protestant, at any time within twelve months before such celebration of marriage, and
 “ a Papist, unless such Protestant and Papist shall have been first married by a clergyman of the
 “ Protestant religion, and that every Popish priest, or reputed Popish priest, who shall celebrate
 “ any marriage between two Protestants, or between any such Protestant and Papist, unless such
 “ Protestant and Papist shall have been first married by a clergyman of the Protestant religion,
 “ shall forfeit the sum of five hundred pounds to his majesty, upon conviction thereof.

“ XIII. And whereas it may be expedient, in case his majesty, his heirs and successors shall be
 “ pleased so to alter the statutes of the college of the holy and undivided Trinity near Dublin, and
 “ of the University of Dublin, as to enable persons professing the Roman Catholic religion to enter
 “ into or to take degrees in the said university, to remove any obstacle, which now exists by statute
 “ law; be it enacted, That from and after the first day of June, one thousand seven hundred and
 “ ninety-three, it shall not be necessary for any person upon taking any of the degrees usually con-
 “ ferred by the said university, to make or subscribe any declaration, or to take any oath, save the
 “ oaths of allegiance and abjuration, any law or statute to the contrary notwithstanding.

“ XIV. Provided always, That no Papist or Roman Catholic, or person professing the Roman
 “ Catholic or Popish religion, shall take any benefit by or under this act, unless he shall have first
 “ taken and subscribed the oath and declaration in this act contained and set forth, and also the said
 “ oath appointed by the said act passed in the thirteenth and fourteenth years of his majesty's reign,
 “ entitled, An Act to enable his Majesty's Subjects of whatever Persuasion to testify their Alle-
 “ giance to him, in some one of his Majesty's four Courts in Dublin, or at the general Sessions of
 “ the Peace, or at any adjournment thereof to be holden for the county, city, or borough wherein
 “ such Papist or Roman Catholics, or person professing the Roman Catholic or Popish religion, doth
 “ inhabit or dwell, or before the going judge or judges of assize in the county wherein such Papist

were the instances of those, who dared openly to resist the recommendation of their sovereign. Upon this point, which came under the sanction of royal pupillage and government support, the majority which occupied the treasury benches and their several dependents were all of accord: the bulk of the minority found no other fault with the Catholic bill, than that it did not go far enough. They wished to leave nothing to ranckle in the hearts of three millions of the people. But upon other points, the changes in the conduct of the ministerial party in the house were singularly marked. At the opening of the session many things concurred to abate the confidence of the ministers, which tended proportionably to raise that of the opposition. They felt a humiliation in yielding more to the Catholics under the influence of royal recommendation, than they had indignantly rejected from their own will and judgment; they were sensible of the weight of the power and influence

“ or Roman Catholic, or person professing the Roman Catholic or Popish religion, doth inhabit and
“ dwell in open Court.

“ XV. Provided always, and be it enacted, That the names of such persons as shall so take and
“ subscribe the said oath and declaration, with their titles and additions, shall be entered upon the
“ rolls, for that purpose to be appointed by said respective courts; and that the said rolls once in
“ every year shall be transmitted to, and deposited in the Rolls Office in this kingdom, to remain
“ amongst the records thereof, and the masters or keepers of the rolls in this kingdom, or their law-
“ ful deputy or deputies, are hereby empowered and required to give and deliver to such person or
“ persons so taking and subscribing the said oaths and declaration, a certificate or certificates of such
“ person or persons having taken and subscribed the said oaths and declaration, for each of which
“ certificates the sum of one shilling and no more shall be paid.

“ XVI. And be it further provided and enacted, That from and after the first day of April, one
“ thousand seven hundred and ninety-three, no freeholder, burghers, freeman, or inhabitant of this
“ kingdom, being a Papist or Roman Catholic, or person professing the Roman Catholic or Popish
“ religion, shall at any time be capable of giving his vote for the electing of any knight or knights
“ of any shire or county within this kingdom, or citizen or burghers to serve in any parliament, until
“ he shall have first produced and shewn to the high sheriff of the said county, or his deputy or
“ deputies, at any election of a knight or knights of the said shire, and to the respective chief officer
“ or officers of any city, borough, or town-corporate, to whom the return of any citizen, or burghers
“ to serve in parliament doth or shall respectively belong, at the election of any citizen or burghers to
“ serve in parliament, such certificate of his having taken and subscribed the said oath and decla-
“ ration, either from the Rolls Office, or from the proper officer of the court in which the said oaths
“ and declaration shall be taken and subscribed; and such person being a freeholder, freeman,
“ burghers, or inhabitant so producing and shewing such certificate, shall be then permitted to vote,
“ as amply and fully as any Protestant freeholder, freeman, burghers, or inhabitant of such county,
“ city, borough, or town-corporate, but not otherwise.”

which

which the opinions of the great landholders of the kingdom, who were at the head of the opposition, carried with them, and they dreaded the unanimous support, which, it was expected, would have been given from without to the efforts of the opposition within their walls. Hence arose that spirit of reconciliation and concession, which so strongly marked the conduct of the ministers for the first week of the session. The undertaking of government to bring forward several of the popular measures, and which were actually brought forward, probably blunted the edge of the opposition, which would otherwise have been offered against the passing of some of the strong measures of government. The first of these was the gunpowder bill;* the next was the convention bill.

The gunpowder bill was designed to defeat a conspiracy, which was supposed and reported to have been then on foot; though the truth of it were never proved, nor credited by many. It is indeed doubtful (as must generally be the effects of every preventative measure) whether the conspiracy must not have failed, had it existed, unless the French had at that time succeeded in Holland; their failure rendered this cautionary measure actually

* 33 Geo. III. c. 2. "An Act to prevent the Importation of Arms, Gunpowder, and Ammunition into this Kingdom, and the removing and keeping of Gunpowder, Arms, and Ammunition without Licence." This bill was not at all opposed in parliament; it was a temporary act to be in force only until the 1st of January 1794, and the end of the next session of parliament. Although many gentlemen of no mean reputation in Ireland have strenuously, and some of them sincerely, opposed the opinions of Mr. Grattan, they have on all hands been allowed to be consistent; nor has his political character been ever represented as temporising. It is fair then to conclude, that he thought and felt upon that measure in 1793, as he expressed himself in 1798, in a petition of the Whig Club, which was transmitted to be presented by the Earl of Moira and Mr. Fox to his majesty; this petition was drawn up by Mr. Grattan, and received the sanction of most of the leaders of opposition who were members of it. (p. 5.) "On the same plan of unconstitutional and scandalous influence did they sell the peerage to procure seats in the commons for the dependency and the dishonour of both houses of parliament: and having from this conduct, aggravated by a most unseemly and unbecoming intemperance of manner, and incontinence of language, lost the confidence of the country, and greatly agitated the same, they then proceeded to a system of coercion, to support their plans of corruption, and to dragoon the people, as they had bought the parliament. They began that system by an act, which tended, in a qualified manner, to disarm his majesty's subjects, under certain regulations, named a gunpowder bill, and had principally in view, to put down the Irish volunteers; and to check the discontent which grew from this measure, as well as from their other measures, further measures of violence, and new causes of discontent were resorted to."

inoperative; though if any understanding between the United Irishmen or other societies in the North, and the French government and their forces in the Netherlands, did exist, or were likely to exist, it was indispensable on the part of government to take every cautionary step to defeat their rebellious projects. The general and real motive, with which the minister proposed the convention bill was to prevent the prevalence of the successful example of the Catholic convention. Mr. Grattan spoke against the bill, and moved for the second reading at a distant day. His grand objection was, that it was a false declaration of law, and deprived the subject of his constitutional right of petitioning against grievances, by rendering the previous measure of consultation and deliberation criminal. The debate on this motion lasted till four o'clock in the morning; several of the opposition spoke for the bill and against the motion; which was negatived by a majority of 128 against 27.* This act (33 Geo. III. c. 29.) to prevent the election or appointment of unlawful assemblies, under pretence of preparing or presenting public petitions or other addresses to his majesty or the parliament, recites, that the election or appointment of assemblies, purporting to represent the people, or any description of the people, under pretence of preparing or presenting petitions, complaints, remonstrances, and declarations, and other addresses to the king, or to both or either houses of parliament, for alteration of matters established by law, or redress of alledged grievances in church and state may be made use of to serve the ends of factious and seditious persons, to the violation of the public peace, and the great and manifest encouragement of riot, tumult, and disorder: and it enacts, that all such assemblies,

* On this occasion Mr. Hobart declared nothing gave him more pain, than that the debate on this bill should have extended to such length, or that it should, on the close of the session, create any thing like a disunion of sentiment. He declared, that nothing but the very alarming state, to which the country had been reduced by a spirit of popular commotion, excited by conventions, usurping the privileges of representation, and assuming to controul parliament, could have induced him to consent to the introduction of this bill; and even the nobleman, who had brought it into the other house, before he had done so, had considered it over and over again, and did not bring it forward until absolute necessity called for some effectual measure to stem the torrent of sedition, at a time when writs had been issued by the society, called United Irishmen, for the purpose of assembling the convention at Athlone, and under a conviction, that if parliament should break up without adopting the bill, which in his idea never did, nor never was intended to meddle with the constitutional rights of the people, the constitution itself might be subverted before parliament could be assembled.

committees,

committees, or other bodies of persons elected, or otherwise constituted or appointed are unlawful assemblies, and that all persons giving or publishing notice of the election to be made of such persons or delegates, or attending, or voting or acting therein by any means are guilty of an high misdemeanor. The act concludes with a declaration, "that nothing in it shall impede the undoubted right of his majesty's subjects, to petition the king or parliament for redress of any public or private grievance."

The convention bill was not combated by Mr. Grattan, and those who agreed with him, so much, because the legislative interference was not wanted to prevent the intended convention of Athlone, or other such meetings: but because the words and tendency of the bill went directly to declare, that every convention and delegation that had existed in that kingdom, were illegal: they objected against the declaratory quality of the act, whereby it bore retrospectively upon past transactions, not upon the enacting part, which, had it been properly framed, would have operated prospectively by way of inhibition against future conventions and delegations.* Confident reports were afloat, about

* When this bill was in committee, Mr. Grattan, amongst many strong things, said, (13 Parl. Debates, p. 546) "This bill is said to be an expedient to restore peace; why, then, is it a reflection? Why do the preamble and the declaration pronounce every man who has been a delegate, all the volunteers, the delegates at Dungannon, the delegates of the convention, the committee of the lawyers corps, and the corps that appointed that committee; the committee of the Catholics, their late conventions, and all the Catholics who appointed that convention; that is, the whole Catholic body, offenders; men guilty of an unlawful assembly, and this moment liable to be prosecuted? For so much has the bill in object, not the peace of the country, but reflection on great bodies, and the gratification of spleen at the expence of the constitution, by voting false doctrine into law, and the brightest passages of your history into unlawful assemblies. "Gentlemen have conceived this bill an expedient to quell the insurgents; let them read the bill. It is not a riot act; the riot act seemed forgotten, until a friend of mine put it into his temporary statute bill; it does not go against riots that are, but conventions that are not. The title of the bill as first brought in, was to prevent riots and tumults arising from conventions: but as the bill had nothing to say to riots, and no riots appeared to have arisen from conventions, such title was in decency dropped, and the real object of the bill professed an act against conventions."

"The bill neither is, nor professes to be a bill against riots; it is only an expedient against conventions, and only an expedient for peace, as far as conventions now disturb it, there were none."

"But gentlemen said, a national convention at Athlone was intended. He did believe that such a one had been intended some time ago, and that then it was not so; or if then intended, that

about the beginning of the session, that there would be a change in the Irish ministry : but to effect it without a change in the British ministry, was found impracticable, unless by a reform in parliament. The additional motive therefore of keeping their places, operated powerfully upon ministers in resisting reform with all their powers both within and without the walls of parliament. It was not ineptly imagined, that by government's patronizing the cause of Catholic emancipation, by bringing forward some, and by acceding to other popular questions, their resistance to the cause of reform might be the more imperceptible, and therefore the more sure. Artful means were also used to irritate the United Irishmen against the gentlemen of the opposition, for not supporting the cause of the French: every attack made by them upon the opposition, was an accumulation of strength to the ministry.

The several great objects, which had been urged by the opposition ever since the last parliament with great perseverance and ability, were the responsibility bill, the place and the pension bill. There were also other measures of great consequence, but of less general importance; such as the disqualifying of revenue officers from sitting in parliament, and the repeal of the police act. By the responsibility bill, no money could be disposed of by the sole order from the king, as was before the case; for Irish officers were to sign all warrants; and every warrant and officer came before parliament. The necessary consequence of such a bill was, that the hereditary revenue was given up, and like the additional supply, voted annually. The great effect and consequence of such a measure, any man who understood government, must see at a glance.

By the pension bill all pensioners for years or during pleasure were excluded; and the sum, which then was near 120,000*l.* a year, was reduced to 80,000*l.*

By the place bill, all new places from the date of the bill were disqualified.

“ that it would be trifling and contemptible. His objection to the bill was, that it was a trick, making a supposed national convention at Athlone in 1793, a pretext for preventing delegation for ever.

“ Such a meeting as was invited to assemble at Athlone, should be understood; for such a meeting would not be an assembly to promote the reform of parliament, but to put itself in the place of parliament.

“ The real object of that bill was, to prevent in future all popular effect whatsoever, particularly at that time when reform had been proposed by the house; a measure offensive to all men, who disliked the people; offensive to most of those, who disliked the Catholics; and detestable to those men, who hated both.”

officers

officers of revenue, whose duty required their absence from Dublin, were excluded: and the principle of excluding them all was carried. The question of reform certainly was not supported by the people out of doors with spirit and perseverance equal to its importance: for after Mr. Ponsonby's promise to bring in a bill of reform and after Mr. Grattan's carrying the principle of its necessity, by his motion for a committee, which were almost at the opening of the session, except some of the northern counties and the city of Dublin, no instruction, address, or petition, came from any of the counties, cities, or great towns; and what would hardly be credited, the people, who had been crying out for the reform of parliament against the aristocracy and the government, would not ask for it when both gave it up; and did just with regard to reform, what they did before with regard to the absentee tax. "A mistress, (said Mr. Flood), which the people of Ireland fought for with a lover's appetite, was, when brought to their embraces, repudiated with a lover's inconstancy."

The people did not take the same means to obtain a reform in parliament, which they had taken to obtain a free trade: for the address had hardly passed the House of Commons, when there passed in volumes of instructions from the people for "free trade, or a short money bill."

The reform of parliament was in fact lost by the people; when the opposition took it up, and the borough patrons were engaged to support it: all were ready but the people; for when another attempt was made by the opposition for a reform in parliament, in a motion by Mr. Forbes, and a third attempt by Mr. Ponsonby, who laid before the House of Commons his plan of reform, it is very surprising, in these different attempts, and in these different intervals, the people did nothing: all the attempts of opposition, and the offers of the owners of boroughs were not seconded.* It was, however, singular, that there was to be seen in the Roman Catholic convention, what could not be found in the counties at large, a resolution in aid of the reform of parliament. The causes of this, perhaps, may be discovered in different circumstances: one was, that the Catholic question, which of necessity took the start of reform, prevented any of the southern or western counties from interfering

* It has been much questioned, whether many of the loudest advocates for reform were actually sincere in their professions, from the paucity of the offerers to surrender up their borough rights. A tolerably accurate list of the boroughs, and their proprietors or patrons at that time in Ireland, may be seen in the Appendix, No. XCVI.

until

until that matter was settled, and gave the government time to rally: but this would only account for the silence of the people when the first motions were made, not when Mr. Ponsonby proposed his plan, which was after the Catholic business was safe in harbour. Another circumstance was, the jealousy of the Protestant ascendants, who dropped reform when the Catholics were admitted to vote at elections, because they were more afraid of the Catholics than of the boroughs. A further circumstance, was the change of affairs in Europe: during the delay of the Catholic bill, the face of the French war was changed; the French were beaten out of Flanders, and the government were no longer afraid of the Irish: and then, indeed, if the counties had interfered, it would have been of no signification: but before that their instructions would probably have been attended to. There was another circumstance, which gave a fatal blow to the reform of parliament; the society of United Irishmen were harshly spoken of by the opposition. Supposing their intentions to be as bad as the country believed them to be, these men could not raise an insurrection, nor bring over a French army, nor plan or execute a gunpowder plot; but they could, and did help to damn reform, and save the ministry. The Roman Catholics carried their measures by avoiding the rock on which the United Irishmen split. The Catholics were conducted by men of capacity; their views were enlarged, their language moderate; English principles and English words: they availed themselves of every circumstance, and every ally; the opposition; the court; the French success; the people of Belfast; and even the United Irishmen, without binding themselves so far to any as to exclude them from the assistance of the other. The French success, by terrifying their enemies, served very much the Catholics; but the Catholics had too much sense to express their approbation of French principles, or to display any treasonable French devices, which damned one of the societies. Their prudent conduct made the king himself their patron; and the lord-lieutenant's secretary moved their bill. The opposition had the merit of supporting the whole of their claims: the opposition did not advise the Catholics to insist on all or nothing: the suggestion of a desperate set, that wanted to make the Catholics not their fellow-subjects, but their instruments: but the opposition struggled to get for them every thing; but if not every thing, as much as they could; and not break with government because they could not get all at once: the Catholics very prudently therefore, did not in terms ask for every thing, while they left every thing open for themselves to ask,
and

and parliament to give. The opposition was not unanimous in the Catholics petition not joining the twenty-five in the session before the last, by whom their cause was preserved, which otherwise would have fallen.

This long and important session* was put an end to on the 16th of August, 1793, when his excellency made a very interesting and impressive speech† from

* Besides the acts already mentioned, the following popular acts were passed in the session of 1793, viz. 33 Geo. III. c. xxv. An act to encourage the improvement of barren land. xxxi. An act for regulating the trade of Ireland to and from the East-Indies, under certain conditions and provisions for a time therein mentioned. 33 Geo. III. c. xxxiv. An act for the support of the honor and dignity of his majesty's crown in Ireland, and for granting to his majesty a civil list establishment, under certain provisions and regulations. 33 Geo. III. c. xli. An act for securing the freedom and independence of the House of the Commons, by excluding therefrom persons holding any offices under the crown, to be hereafter created, or holding certain offices therein enumerated, or pensions for term of years, or during his majesty's pleasure. 33 Geo. III. c. xlviii. An act to remove doubts respecting the functions of juries in cases of libel. 33 Geo. III. c. lii. An act for the advancement of trade and manufactures, by granting the sums therein mentioned for the support of commercial credit. The same causes which had combined to give a temporary check to the commercial credit of Great Britain, had operated with equal alarm in the sister kingdom. The parliament of Ireland, therefore, evinced the same prompt and preventive care as had been manifested by the English government, by undertaking to make good the sum of 200,000*l.* which the bank had engaged to advance to certain mercantile houses, with interest at five per cent; a measure, which renewed and enlivened the current of commercial credit, and prevented its short suspension from being attended with any consequences prejudicial to the trade of the country. In short the conduct of the government of Ireland during this session, was evidently calculated to restore tranquillity and defeat the designs of those, who wished to raise public discontent, and to introduce the principles of French anarchy; while these salutary laws strengthened the executive power in securing the blessings of domestic peace and public security.

† “ MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN.

“ THE wisdom and liberality, with which you attended to his majesty's recommendation in favor of his Roman Catholic subjects, are highly pleasing to the king. You must be fully sensible of his majesty's gracious condescension in committing to your judgement the application of the hereditary revenue; and I am ordered by his majesty to signify his approbation of the provisions which have been made for the support of his civil government, and the honor and dignity of his crown; and to express his confidence, that your liberal concessions to the Roman Catholics, and the measures for the regulation of the public expenditure, and for the limitation of offices and pensions, to which his majesty has been graciously pleased to consent, with a view to the advantage of the public, will cement a general union of sentiment among all classes of his majesty's subjects, in support of the established constitution.

“ His majesty has seen with real satisfaction that friendly disposition which has been manifested by the parliaments of Great Britain and Ireland, for strengthening the connection of the two
Vol. II. 3 I “ kingdoms

from the throne; the most prominent feature of which was the expression of his majesty's pleasure at the passing of the bill in favor of the Roman Catholics. It justly portrayed the gratitude which that body owes to the personal tenderness and regards of their sovereign for the great benefits of his reign.

“ kingdoms by mutual acts of concession. I am authorized to acquaint you, that an act has passed the British parliament to permit goods of Asia, Africa or America, legally imported into Ireland, to be imported from thence into Great Britain. This is a signal proof of her attention to your interests; whilst the confirmation of the charter of the East India Company by the parliament of Ireland, displays on your part a cordial zeal for the support of Great Britain, and a judicious consideration of the great and essential interests of the empire.

“ I am to make my acknowledgements for the many salutary laws you have enacted to strengthen the executive government, which will materially tend to defeat the designs of the enemies to the freedom and happiness of this kingdom.

“ The apprehensions of embarrassments, which for a time hung over commercial transactions, were to me a subject of the utmost anxiety; and I am to return you my thanks for sanctioning those measures which I took in support of credit, and which, I trust, have had the happiest effect in preventing the ill consequences of such apprehensions.

“ The spirit of discontent which prevailed amongst the lower classes of the people at the beginning of the session, has since burst into acts of riot and insurrection; and I have been under the painful necessity of employing his majesty's forces, whose steadiness and good conduct have on all occasions been manifested, and by whose exertions the civil magistrates have been enabled, in a great measure, to restore the general tranquillity.

“ Under all the circumstances of the country, I thought it proper to call forth a very considerable portion of the militia of this kingdom, I am to express his majesty's approbation of a measure which affords at present material assistance, and lays the foundation of a permanent constitutional force, that has been found by experience in Great Britain of great resource in public emergencies.

“ His majesty feels with the greatest concern the expence brought upon his people by domestic disturbances, added to the consequences of a foreign war, into which we have been forced by the wanton and unprovoked aggression of France, but you will reflect that you are contending for the preservation of your property, and for the security of your happy constitution.

“ The successes with which it has pleased the Divine Providence to bless the arms of his majesty and his allies, afford the best prospect of a happy issue to this important contest; and it is his majesty's earnest hope, that a continuance of vigorous exertions will finally obtain a secure and lasting peace.

“ I have entire confidence that in your respective counties, you will exert your utmost influence in maintaining the public tranquillity, and in carrying the laws into full execution. You may be assured that I shall on all occasions take the most speedy and effectual measures, in the exercise of those powers with which I am invested, for the repression of outrage and tumult, and the protection of his majesty's faithful and loyal subjects.”

Although

Although several excellent laws were passed in the year 1793, yet the administration did not altogether gain popularity by any of them. The leading measures of grace, which affected the great bulk of the people, were attributed to the personal interference of a benign and fatherly sovereign over the heads and against the wishes of those, who had the preceding year rejected their application for less favors with indignation and insult. The passing of the act so emphatically calculated to destroy all odious distinctions between Irishmen of different religious persuasions, altered the laws, but crushed not the spirit, which kept them up. Great difficulties at first prevailed in raising the different regiments of militia; for although Catholics were rendered capable of serving in them, no Catholic officers were appointed: this marked reprobation of all gentlemen of that communion so directly in teeth of the act, diffused a general diffidence amidst the lower orders, and it was found necessary to appoint several Catholic officers, before the militia corps could be completed.*

There

* A still stronger instance of the inefficacy of the act to overcome the virulence of bigotry and prejudice occurred at the quarterly meeting of the guild of merchants in Dublin: about 130 freemen were present, which was considered a full hall. The principal business of the day was, to take into consideration the petitions of thirty Roman Catholic merchants, praying admission into the guild: the first petition in the order being that of Mr. Edward Byrne, was read, and on the question for granting its prayer being put by the roaster a ballot was demanded by Sir Edward Newenham, seconded by Mr. Edward Druit, of the custom house; the ballot having accordingly taken place, there appeared,

For Mr. Byrne's admission,	63
Against it,	67
	—
Majority against admission	4

The next petition read was that of Mr. Valentine O'Connor, and a ballot on that being insisted upon, the admission was also rejected by nearly the same majority.

The petitions were supported by Mr. Joshua Pim, Mr. James Hartley, and Mr. Jeremiah D'Olier, with manly eloquence and irrefragable argument, in which they clearly demonstrated the illiberality and the impolicy, as well as the refractory insult offered to the king and the legislature of the kingdom, in opposing the operation of a bill calculated to unite the people of Ireland, by removing the unwise distinction and incapacity which so great a part of the community had laboured under.

One of the gentlemen (Mr. D'Olier) among other things remarked, that it ill became those, who received the public bounty in pensions, to stand foremost in opposing franchise to the most eminent merchants of the kingdom, who so largely contributed by the enormous duties they paid, to sup-

There were few or no parts of the kingdom, in which attempts were not made by a certain party to traduce and vilify the Catholics, in order to defeat that confidence and consequence, which the patronizing countenance of their sovereign had given them throughout the nation. Not only the exclusive distinctions were publicly kept up in corporations, but anonymous charges and slanders were published and circulated with all the industry of envenomed acrimony. The Catholics published protestations against these anonymous attacks, with fresh resolutions and avowals of their loyalty and affection to the king and constitution.* The growth and progress of derision,

port the fund from which these pensions were provided. It was observed on that occasion on an accurate enquiry and investigation of the business, that the majority consisted of

Plain men who really thought church and state in danger,	25
Pensioners, placemen, and hangers on, — — —	25
Custom house officers, &c. &c. — — —	17
	<hr/> 67

* The following resolutions of the Catholics of Wexford is given as a specimen of those charges and Defences.

“ AT a meeting of the Catholics of the town and neighbourhood of Wexford, on Tuesday, the 30th of July, 1793; James Edward Devereux, in the Chair.

“ We, the Roman Catholics of the town and neighbourhood of Wexford, having acquiesced in the resolution and recommendation of our late General Committee, notwithstanding the many degrading and injurious distinctions still existing against us, to act no more as a body, but as Irishmen, united by one will and interest, find ourselves most reluctantly compelled by different attacks, immediately pointed at our honor, to defend ourselves as a distinct people; our loyalty has been traduced, our views misrepresented, and our conduct defamed; we conceive that sinking under such infamous and audacious slander would be the ruin of our country, and bereave us of the affections of our king and our fellow subjects, for we have learnt from the history of all nations, but particularly from our own, that unrefuted calumnies lead from the extinction of the honest fame of a nation, to the final extinction of her liberties.

“ *Resolved* therefore, That it is a base and scandalous falsehood that the Catholics of Ireland ever entertained the thought or harboured the project, either in private or public, of severing the sister countries from each other, or of renouncing their loyalty and gratitude towards a sovereign, to whom, of all who ever sat upon the throne, they are the most indebted.

“ *Resolved*, That the Catholics of Ireland never sought any other boon but that of equal law and equal liberty, such as Englishmen possess, and such as is equally the right of Irishmen, and that they are satisfied for ever to abide by one common fate with Englishmen, so as they may for ever enjoy the common blessings of the constitution as established in king, lords, and commons, under a separate legislature and a common king.

“ *Resolved*, That the general committee of the Catholics never exercised the right of legation in any

derism, particularly in the county of Meath, afforded fuel to the enemies of the Catholic body, which they studied to implicate in the crimes of those ferocious miscreants. Painful industry was employed to work up the imaginations of the inhabitants into the expectation of a general massacre of all the Protestants throughout that county. No arts were left untried to criminate the Catholic body: every exceptionable word or action of an individual, however contemptible, was charged on the entire body; and the object was now, not so much to suppress the Defenders, as to fasten their enormities on the Catholic body.

This state of affairs was most favorable to the cause of the defenders. They committed depredations without control; and assembling in large bodies by night to learn the use of arms, they went through military evolutions under their captains, the most infamous individuals of the community; generally the proscribed objects of civil or martial law. Their necessities multiplied, under the specious name of defenders, they indulged in all sorts of crimes. They talked of liberty and equality. They threatened to cut off heads, to burn and to destroy wherever enmity appeared, or opposition was made to them. The evil gained strength and vigor with the season, and raged for six

“ any one instance, nor any other right but in absolute subordination to the laws of their country,
 “ nor can we understand how these proceedings and pursuits can be accounted criminal, unless it is
 “ proved that the British Constitution, the sole object of those pursuits, is a code of iniquity and vice,
 “ which ought to be rejected with detestation, and not contended for at the hazard of every thing
 “ dear to man.

“ *Resolved*, That we are unalterably attached to the peace, happiness, union, and liberty of Ire-
 “ land, and therefore from our hearts abhor and reprobate any disturbances, which may endanger
 “ the possession of those invaluable objects, and that we recommend most seriously and earnestly to
 “ our Catholic brethren to join and co-operate in every loyal and constitutional measure to suppress
 “ them, *be their authors who they may*.

“ *Resolved*, That we highly approve of the conduct of our late committee, who have proved us
 “ not unworthy of freedom, by evincing our loyalty to our king, our gratitude to the legislature and
 “ our friends, and our unceasing desire to fulfill his majesty's gracious wish to unite all classes and
 “ descriptions of the people, in support of our most excellent constitution.

“ *Resolved*, That the silly assertion which has been publicly made, that the Catholics of the
 “ county of Wexford were induced to join the committee by the promise of ten pounds a year,
 “ freehold, to the lower classes, is equally devoid of probability and truth, and deserves nothing
 “ but our contempt.

“ *Resolved*, That these resolutions be published, and that our chairman do transmit a copy to each
 “ of the gentlemen who were delegated to the late general committee.”

or eight months without control: unprejudiced men could not suppress their astonishment, that these enormities happened under the very eyes of some right honorable gentlemen of great weight and influence, and no exertions made to protect the peaceful subject, or to punish the lawless plunderer. Subsequent events have strengthened the suspicion, that some of those gentlemen wished to see things arrive at a degree of maturity in order to serve a most base purpose.

The disturbances had now risen to such a height in certain parts of the county, that society could no longer exist in such a state. A meeting was holden in Navan for the purpose of repressing them, and a secret committee was formed. Subscriptions were entered into; and rewards offered for discovering and prosecuting to conviction the disturbers of the public peace. Through these means this most nefarious gang of villains was broken; many of them, and chiefly their ringleaders, were taken and lodged in gaol, and the rest fled the country. Of those taken, some turned approvers; the Reverend Mr. Butler made so judicious an use of their and other informations, that peace and security were rapidly returning to the distracted inhabitants. This amiable gentleman was a magistrate, though not a native of the country; he was chaplain to the Bishop of Meath, and a member of the secret committee; he was a man of a good and well cultivated understanding; benevolent and charitable; firm and undaunted in his pursuits; and his great efforts to restore the peace of the country, were most successful and most generally applauded, because they were well directed. His activity had effectually checked the spirit of defenderism in its progress westward: it scarcely appeared on the western side of the Boyne and Blackwater. This check had been most opportunely given; for now other disturbances arose in the neighbourhood of Athboy, which, if strengthened by the association of defenders, would in all probability have been more permanent, more extensive, and more destructive.

The injudicious and corrupt modes of carrying the militia act into execution, and the strange misconceptions entertained of it by the common people, gave rise to these disturbances. They had conceived, that they were to be duped as the Green Boys (or Green Linnets as they were called) in the American war by false promises; and they were confirmed in their false opinion by some Protestant gentlemen, who assured them, that notwithstanding the professions of government they were all to be sent to Botany Bay; and that they might
thank

thank their priests for it, who, in procuring their signatures to the declaration signed *Edward Byrne*, had absolutely disposed of them to government. To render the militia act more palatable, several insurance offices were opened, in which, extravagant sums were exacted from all, as well from those who did not come under the act, as from those who did. The ignorance of the country people afforded a full scope for imposition. From those causes the common people in the neighbourhood of Athboy rose in tumult. For several days they overran the country to the number of several hundreds; they robbed all the gentlemen and peaceable inhabitants of their arms; swore them not to be inimical to their interest, and set all the forges to work in the fabrication of warlike weapons: but during all this time they disclaimed the very name of defenders. For several days, the magistrates and other leading men of the country were perfectly inactive, one only excepted, who was not seconded: and on the rioters hearing that this gentleman had sent for a military force, they assembled to the number of about a thousand men, in the town of Athboy; forced many innocent and peaceable inhabitants into their ranks, and appointed a general. This ruffian billeting his men through the town for breakfast, and promising them better fare in the evening, soon marshalled them in military array. Feeling themselves in force, they talked of attacking property and of dividing the spoils of the country; and they awaited with impatience the approach of the military, whom they had already vanquished in their wild imaginations. The military had been summoned from Kells, Navan, and Trim. A company of foot from Kells, with the magistrate already mentioned at their head, arrived long before the rest; and without waiting to be reinforced, instantly marched up to the mob, and very imprudently closed with them, so that they were soon surrounded. Four or five of the mob, and two of the military fell on the occasion. This engagement might be called a drawn battle; the military and the mob retreated at the same time, and the mob as eagerly dispersed, as they had assembled in the morning; so that the cavalry, who arrived afterward, could only pick up some stragglers, whom they lodged in the county jail. These wretches were condemned at the ensuing assizes to be confined for three years, and to be whipped; which latter part of their sentence was executed with exemplary severity. This popular phrenzy was consumed by its sudden violence: all symptoms of tumult or disorder instantly subsided, and no part of the kingdom has been more peaceable ever since, than the neighbourhood of Athboy.

The

The Reverend Mr. Butler still continued his exertions with unabating vigor. Not content with having effectually checked the progress of the defenders; he advanced upon them into those parts, in which their chief strength lay. He seized upon several persons, against whom he had information in the baronies of Slane and Morgallion; and now the expiring cause of defenders was to be closed by a desperate act. Mr. Butler, it is said, was often threatened by the unprincipled miscreants, to whom he was so obnoxious, sometimes by anonymous letters, and at other times by verbal messages. He despised those threats so far, as to go alone by night: he was way-laid, on the 25th of October, 1793; and about eight o'clock in the evening, within some perches of the back gate of Ardbracon, the seat of the Bishop of Meath, he was shot through the body from behind a hedge.

The indignation raised by this atrocious act soon roused a divided and inactive people. A meeting was called in Navan, to which the first men of rank, of fortune, and of consequence in the county repaired. Amongst them were the Earl of Beftive, the Right Honorable Burton Conyngham, the speaker of the House of Commons, and Doctor Maxwell, Bishop of Meath, his brother in law. Subscriptions were entered into to a very large amount; and a very considerable reward was offered for the conviction of the infamous wretches concerned in the murder of Mr. Butler: and in order to suppress or to prevent in future such disorders, as had, for some time past disturbed the country, that part of the act, which passed the session before in favor of Roman Catholics, pointing out the conditions under which Papists might possess, or carry arms, was recited; and a reward of four guineas was offered to the informer of every gun found in the possession of any Papist not so qualified. As this measure was seemingly sanctioned by law, it met with no opposition at the first meeting, even from the Roman Catholics who were present: but it was soon found to encrease rather than check the evil: the measure was eminently calculated to promote the interest of defenders, robbers, and thieves, to whom honest men became an immediate and certain prey from the moment they were disarmed. At the second meeting the Earl of Beftive proposed an alteration of this measure, but was violently opposed by Mr. Foster the speaker: he insisted upon the strict execution of the law, and denounced vengeance against every magistrate, that should be found slack in his duty. In pursuance of this injunction the military for some weeks were nightly called out, and headed by a constable, (not always sober)

paid

paid domiciliary visits to the decent farmers in the neighbourhood after midnight, summoned them to deliver up their arms, and put their families in extreme terror. The outrageous attacks of the defenders were scarcely more formidable. This system was at last found too violent to be continued.

Mr. Foster openly professed himself at all times an enemy to all Catholic indulgence, and was prominently active in his zeal against them. The Earl of Beftive's natural mildness prevented him from opposing the new-born influence in the county of Meath, which Mr. Foster assumed on this, for the first occasion, from the overflowing of his zeal against Popery. One of the members of the sub-committee was a Catholic, and this right honorable gentleman undertook to new model it by excluding from it every member that was not a magistrate. After these exertions at Navan, he went to Arddracan, and thence returned to Navan, of which he seemed to take a survey. Strange rumours were immediately circulated, that the dark business of defenderism was traced to its source, and that the discovery would astonish the nation. On the next public market day, Mr. John Fay, a most respectable and amiable character of that town, was arrested in the open street: bail was refused, and he was ignominiously hurried under a military escort to the county gaol. He was charged with having conspired against the life of Mr. Butler. The town of Navan was chiefly inhabited by Catholics, and had lately been most grossly traduced; it had been termed a sink of iniquity, and the judges in their way from Trim to the county of Louth had been warned as they tendered their personal safety not to pass through the town of Navan. The imprisonment of Mr. Fay gave rise to serious apprehensions on one part of a general proscription of the Catholics, and on the other to the belief of a Popish conspiracy to massacre all the Protestants. Thus were the feelings of the whole district made the sport of the wicked, who were attempting to play the basest game under these fictitious plots.

There evidently was a deep plot laid by persons of political influence in the country to criminate Mr. Fay, and several other respectable persons of his persuasion as aiders and abettors of treason, murder, and every outrage, that can disturb society and dissolve civil government: the immediate object of which was to stigmatize the body of Roman Catholics. But justice providentially prevailed, and opened to view the base machinations and perjuries of the wretched informer Lynch, and other miscreants, raked out of the neighbouring gaols, who had been hired and suborned to swear away the

lives of innocent and meritorious men.* The honorable acquittal of Mr. Fay, and the public exposure of the attempts of the junto, to criminate by the like means, Mr. Dowdal of Clown, Mr. Bird of Drogheda, and some other Catholic gentlemen of the first commercial consequence, upon whom the most ferocious severity had been exercised whilst under the control of the magistrates, cast such disgrace and infamy upon the perpetrators of this dark conspiracy, that for a time the Catholics were no longer molested† by this species of persecution. The Catholics in these parts of the country most infested by the defenders, had from their numbers suffered more from those depredators than the Protestants, and although it evidently were a plebeian league against property; yet it is to be remarked, that in every assize for the county of Meath since the defenders first appeared there, no Roman Catholic was admitted on juries on the crown side, although formerly those juries had generally consisted of Catholics. The malice, prejudice, falsehood, and infamy, that appeared at the assizes at Trim upon the trial of Mr. Fay, were too rank for the most sanguinary bigot. The judge was shocked: every honest man cried shame: the junto were confounded at the failure of their own schemes.‡

In

* A subsequent discovery providentially confirmed the innocence of Mr. Fay, Mr. Gibney, Mr. Byrne, and other respectable gentlemen, the intended victims of a most bigotted and malevolent junto. On the 9th of August, 1794, at Trim, the execution of Thomas Shieran, who at the last assizes was convicted of a robbery in that neighbourhood, was attended by some of the most respectable magistrates and gentlemen in the vicinity. The culprit a few moments before his being launched into eternity, declared with all the contrite solemnity becoming a dying penitent, that he and three men of the name of Lawless, all of whom lived contiguous to the Bishop of Meath's demesne, had concerted and conspired the death of Mr. Butler; that they lay in wait for him some nights previous to the fatal one; that one of the Lawlesses was the person who fired the shot, which killed Mr. B. and that no other person whatever was concerned in the plot. On a former day he voluntarily came forward, and made this discovery to one of the Bishop of Meath's servants; after which he and the Lawlesses were lodged in the same prison, where it is feared an intercourse with some dark villain occasioned his afterwards denying his first attestation, and accusing men innocent of the fact; this of course invalidated his evidence against the Lawlesses, who were enlarged.

† The most active instrument in harassing and attempting by various arts and stratagems to criminate the Catholics of Navan, was a young relative of a man of consequence in the county of Louth, who wantonly jested about his expeditions to Navan, by saying, that he had been *buck hunting*.

‡ Of these trials Mr. Curran thus spoke in a debate in the commons (17 P. D. p. 31.) "Of the trials of Mr. Fay, and of the principal Catholic merchants of Drogheda, he said he could speak
" as

In order to counteract these attempts to calumniate and criminate the body of the Catholics by identifying the causes of Roman Catholics, united Irishmen, defenders, French levellers, and sworn enemies to the constitution, the Catholic bishops presented an humble address to his excellency on the 17th of December, 1793, to be transmitted to his majesty, expressive of their unshaken loyalty and grateful affection to his majesty's person and government, which was most graciously received by his majesty.* Similar efforts,

“ as an eye witness, and he declared them to be scenes of more atrocity and horror than he had ever seen exhibited in a court of justice ; it was he said, what the Catholics might have expected when they found their avowed enemies continued in authority, and the malice of an implacable government left to indemnify itself by vengeance what it had lost by law.”

“ * The humble Address of the Prelates of the Roman Catholic Communion in Ireland to the King's Most Excellent Majesty.

“ MOST GRACIOUS SOVEREIGN,

“ WE your majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects the undersigned, for ourselves, and on behalf of the other prelates of the Roman Catholic Communion in Ireland, impressed with the lively sentiments of inviolable attachment to your majesty's sacred person and government, which, we trust, will ever distinguish those of our order in this kingdom, are happy on this occasion, the earliest that has offered, of humbly adding the tribute of our acknowledgments to the general voice of a grateful people.

“ The recollection of our past, and the contemplation of our present condition, will best illustrate the character of a patriot king, impartially attending to the wants and defects of his people. Under your majesty's auspicious reign, and particularly through your late paternal recommendation to parliament, heavy penalties to which we were subject, have been removed. We were patient under disabilities ; we are thankful for the happy change. Ministers of a gospel, which enjoins meekness in adversity, and submission to those who are constituted in authority over us, we have not at any time omitted to inculcate the lesson of obedience and loyalty. The favors we have received add private feeling to public obligation ; we shall continue with unremitting zeal to discharge that indispensable duty.

“ We have never ceased to admire the many eminent virtues, which adorn your royal character, and attract the applause of every lover of morality ; a brilliant example in your elevated rank, and in an age too prone to neglect the impulse of truth, and the sacred injunctions of religion.

“ Whilst we lament the necessity that inflicts the calamities of war upon any, even the most depraved of our fellow-creatures, we incessantly supplicate the Almighty Disposer of events, that, blessing your majesty's arms with success, he may crown you with the glory of stopping the progress of that atheistical faction, which aims at the subversion of every religious and moral principle.

“ We look towards that unhappy nation, which is the object of hostility, and acknowledge with humble thanksgiving the goodness of Divine Providence, which, under the best of constitutions,

forts, prejudicial to the body of the Catholics, were about the same time attempted in different parts of the kingdom; but neither so openly, nor so virulently,

“ has bestowed on the land we live in, freedom exempt from anarchy, protection guarded against oppression, and a prince calculated by his wisdom and virtue to preserve that happy condition of society.

“ If, Sire, in our peculiar situation we presume to approach your majesty, it is, but that we may bless that royal goodness, to which we are so deeply indebted. May the God of truth and harmony, to whom your pious endeavours to unite your subjects cannot fail to be acceptable, cement and strengthen their union. May he grant to your majesty long to reign over a people, whose happiness you have effectually laboured to promote. May your wisdom long continue to give energy to the counsels, your benevolence to form the character of the kingdoms committed to your charge, and may your descendants, to the latest posterity, filling the throne of these realms, possess, like your majesty, the affections and approbation of their subjects.

“ JOHN THOMAS TROY, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Dublin.

“ RICHARD O'REILLY, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Armagh.

“ THOMAS BRAY, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Cashel.

“ BOS. EAGAN, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Tuam.

“ FRANCIS MOYLAN, Roman Catholic Bishop of Cork.

“ P. J. PLUNKETT, Roman Catholic Bishop of Meath.

“ JAMES CAULFIELD, Roman Catholic Bishop of Ferns.

“ DOMINICK BELLEW, Roman Catholic Bishop of Killala.

“ GERALD TEAHAN, Roman Catholic Bishop of Kerry.”

“ To his Excellency JOHN EARL of WESTMORLAND, Lord Lieutenant General, and Governor General of Ireland.

“ The humble Address of the Prelates of the Roman Catholic Communion in Ireland.

“ MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,

“ WE the undersigned, for ourselves, and on behalf of the other prelates of the Roman Catholic Communion in Ireland, laying at the foot of the throne the solemn assurance of those sentiments of allegiance and gratitude, which are cherished in the breast of every individual of our order, beg leave to express our feelings to your excellency, by whom our gracious sovereign is represented with so much honor to yourself, and advantage to this kingdom.

“ We have submitted patiently to the restrictions, which the legislature thought it expedient to impose, and we do now most thankfully receive the relaxation of these laws, the boon of a more enlightened age, and a milder temper. With emotions of the most lively gratitude we acknowledge the wisdom and benignity of your excellency's administration, by which, under Divine Providence, such favorable dispositions have been promoted in our Protestant fellow-subjects.

“ We have observed, with deep regret, that your excellency's government, although conciliatory and conceding, has not been entirely exempt from some outrages of the misguided and unreflecting poor, deviating equally from the dictates of law, reason, and of religion. The Roman Catholic clergy have never ceased, though sometimes with great hazard to themselves,

“ to

virulently, as at Navan and Drogheda. As the whole combination of that party in parliament, which had monopolized the political power of the country, was inadequate to resist the forcible recommendation of a benign sovereign to unchain three millions of his loyal subjects, so did their masked batteries fail out of parliament, from which they played upon the credulous bigotry and antiquated prejudices of the unenlightened or self-interested part of the community. Individually, the asperities of religious rancour were

“ to represent the wickedness of tumult, to explain the advantages, which every rank derives
 “ from subordination, and to exhort their flocks to practise that obedience to established authority,
 “ which our religion ordains, and which is indispensable to the existence of society. Bound by
 “ feeling and inclination, as well as by a more sacred duty, we shall ever continue to instill into
 “ those committed to our care every sentiment of loyalty and affection to our good king, every
 “ principle of submission to the laws, and of veneration for that happy constitution, which has
 “ produced so much good to these realms, and of which the benefits have been of late so liberally
 “ imparted to the Roman Catholics of this kingdom.

“ And we earnestly beseech Almighty God, to bless your excellency, and prolong your days,
 “ that you may live to see that land flourish, in which the seeds of prosperity have been sown
 “ under your auspices.

“ We humbly request, that your excellency will be pleased to transmit our dutiful addresses to our
 “ most gracious sovereign.”

HIS EXCELLENCY'S ANSWER.

“ I RETURN you my sincere thanks for this dutiful address. Your declarations of loyalty and gratitude are highly becoming and honourable ; and your determination to
 “ instil into the persons committed to your spiritual care, the principles of duty to the king, of submission to the laws, and veneration of the established constitution, prove your attention to their
 “ welfare and happiness.

“ I will immediately transmit your dutiful and loyal address to be laid before his majesty.”

Dublin Castle, 13th January, 1794.

“ SIR,

“ I HAVE the honor to acquaint you, by command of the lord lieutenant,
 “ that his excellency has received a letter from the Right Honorable Henry Dundas, one of his
 “ majesty's principal secretaries of state, dated the 8th instant, signifying, that he had laid before
 “ the king the address to his majesty from the prelates of the Roman Catholic Communion in Ireland, expressing their inviolable attachment to his majesty's person and government, and that
 “ his majesty was pleased to receive the same in the most gracious manner.

“ I have the honor to be, Sir,

“ Your most obedient humble servant,

“ S. HAMILTON.

“ *Rev. Dr. Troy.*”

daily

daily wearing out : though it be to be lamented, that a certain party, which very soon after this time shewed itself openly under the appellation of *Orangemen*, was prominently active in renovating and extending the flame of religious feuds, discord, and animosity. The spirit and end of which combinations emphatically counteracted that union of affection and interest, so strongly recommended to the people by the parental tenderness of their sovereign. Since the passing of the act of the last session, the Catholics began to feel themselves admitted into the bosom of their country, and to busy themselves about forming settlements in it, as if they no longer looked to foreign aid or protection for the benefits of improving their minds or morals. Their prelates on the 14th of February, 1794, presented a very impressive memorial to the Earl of Westmorland, to obtain his majesty's licence to found and endow seminaries for the education of their clergy within their own native kingdom.*

The

" * To his Excellency JOHN Earl of WESTMORLAND, Lord Lieutenant General, and General
" Governor of Ireland.

" The humble Memorial of the Prelates of the Roman Catholic Communion in Ireland.

" MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,

" YOUR memorialists beg leave, with the greatest deference, to represent to
" your excellency,

" That a great number of his majesty's subjects in this kingdom are attached to the Roman Catholic religion, inasmuch that they have submitted to legal penalties, rather than abandon it.

" That the duties of morality have been taught, and religious rites administered, in the manner most acceptable to this portion of his majesty's subjects, by a body of clergymen educated according to the discipline of the Roman Catholic church. The conduct of these clergymen has never suffered the reproach of disaffection or irregularity ; on the contrary, they have been complimented, on many occasions, for assiduously instructing their respective flocks in the sacred precepts of Christianity, and for inculcating obedience to the laws, and veneration for his majesty's royal person and government. Memorialists humbly apprehend, that the labors of a body of men thus occupied are useful to the state, and that considerable detriment would ensue to the cause of religion, and to that of good order, which is connected with it, if the public were to be deprived of their services.

" Under the laws which formerly existed, your excellency's memorialists were obliged to resort to foreign countries for education, particularly to the kingdom of France, where they had procured many valuable establishments : four hundred persons were constantly maintained and educated therein, for the ministry of the Roman Catholic religion in Ireland. In the anarchy which at present afflicts that kingdom, these establishments have been necessarily destroyed ; and, even although lawful authority should be restored, memorialists conceive the loss to be irreparable ;

The confidence and boldness, with which the popular societies had lately expressed their political sentiments had become very obnoxious to government,

“ reparable ; for the revenues would not easily be recovered ; and as the profligate principles of rebellion and atheism, propagated by the faction, which now rules that kingdom, may not be speedily effaced, they would expose their youth to the contagion of sedition and infidelity, and their country to the danger of thus introducing the pernicious maxims of a licentious philosophy. Memorialists therefore are apprehensive, that it may be found difficult to supply the ministry of the Roman Catholic church in Ireland with proper clergymen, unless seminaries, schools, or academies be instituted, for educating the youth destined to receive holy orders according to the discipline of their own church, and under ecclesiastical superiors of their own communion ; and they beg leave further to represent, with all due respect and deference to your excellency’s wisdom, that said institution would prove of advantage to the nation at large, and be a matter of great indulgence to his majesty’s subjects professing the Roman Catholic religion in Ireland.

“ Whilst sentiments unfavourable to the members of their communion prevailed, your excellency’s memorialists were discouraged from seeking the means of education in their native country ; but conceiving that the demeanor of the Roman Catholics has removed such ill opinion, they humbly hope, that the moral instruction of a people who have been legally authorized to acquire landed property in this kingdom, and upon whom many other valuable privileges have been conferred under your excellency’s administration and auspices, may appear to his majesty’s ministers a subject not unworthy of his royal consideration and bounty. Your excellency’s memorialists are confirmed in this hope, by the opinion often and publicly expressed by respectable individuals of their Protestant fellow-subjects, that it would conduce to the public good to educate the Irish ecclesiastics of the Roman Catholic religion within his majesty’s dominions.

“ Your excellency’s memorialists also beg leave humbly to represent, that although the mode of education practised in the university of Dublin, may be well adapted to form men for the various departments of public business, yet it is not alike applicable to the ecclesiastics of a very ritual religion, and by no means calculated to impress upon the mind those habits of austere discipline, so indispensable in the character of a Roman Catholic clergyman, that without them he might become a very dangerous member of society.

“ That a distinct place of education is also necessary, because the regulations of the Roman Catholic church enjoin, that candidates for holy orders shall be proficient in certain branches of learning, which are not included in the exercises of the university of Dublin.

“ That even where the Roman Catholic is the established religion, candidates for holy orders are obliged to receive the most important part of their education in seminaries, distinct from the public universities.

“ That many persons, who destine themselves to the ministry of the Roman Catholic religion in Ireland, are not sufficiently opulent to bear the expence of education in the university of Dublin, and of constant residence in the metropolis ; it is therefore the more necessary to provide literary instruction for them on more easy conditions ; and although the liberality of the present heads of the university might induce them to receive persons on the foundation, yet neither

“ could

ment, and in order to check the pruriency of civil liberty, which now was considered as a mere cloak for sedition or treason, the attorney-general was directed to file an information *ex officio* against Mr. A. Hamilton Rowan for distributing *a seditious libel with the intent and design of exciting and diffusing

“ could a sufficient number be thus accommodated, nor would it prove grateful to the feelings of the parties; and many other inconveniencies might arise, if young men should observe great temporal advantages conferred upon their fellow students, whilst they were restricted to the humble walk of a subordinate ministry.

“ From these considerations, and conceiving that piety, learning, and subordination would be thereby essentially promoted, your excellency’s memorialists are induced to undertake the establishment of proper places for the education of the clerical youth of their communion. Being advised by counsel, that his majesty’s royal licence is necessary, in order legally to secure the funds which they may appropriate for that purpose, they humbly beg leave to solicit your excellency’s recommendation to our most gracious sovereign, that he will be pleased to grant his royal licence for the endowment of academies or seminaries, for educating and preparing young persons to discharge the duties of Roman Catholic clergymen in this kingdom, under ecclesiastical superiors of their own communion.

“ JOHN THOMAS TROY, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Dublin,

January 14, 1794.

“ For myself, and on Behalf of the Prelates of the Roman

“ Catholic communion in Ireland.”

* The libel laid in the information, was to the following effect:

“ The Society of United Irishmen at Dublin to the Volunteers of Ireland.

“ William Drennan, Chairman.

“ Archibald Hamilton Rowan, Secretary.

“ CITIZEN soldiers, you first took up arms to protect your country from foreign enemies and from domestic disturbance; for the same purposes it now becomes necessary, that you should resume them; a proclamation has been issued in England for embodying the militia, and a proclamation has been issued by the lord lieutenant and council in Ireland for repressing all seditious associations; in consequence of both these proclamations, it is reasonable to apprehend danger from abroad and danger at home, from whence but from apprehended danger are these menacing preparations for war drawn through the streets of this capital, or whence if not to create that internal commotion which was not found, to shake that credit which was not affected, to blast that volunteer honour which was hitherto inviolate, are those terrible suggestions and rumours and whispers that meet us at every corner, and agitate at least our old men, our women, and children; whatever be the motive, or from whatever quarter it arises, alarm has arisen, and you volunteers of Ireland are therefore summoned to arms at the instance of government as well as by the responsibility attached to your character, and the permanent obligations of your constitution. We will not at this day condescend to quote authorities for the right of having and of using arms, but we will cry aloud, even amidst the storm raised by the witchcraft of a proclamation, that to your formation was owing the peace and protection of this island, to your relaxation

diffusing amongst the subjects of that realm discontent, jealousies, and suspicions of his majesty, and disaffection and disloyalty to his person and government,

“ tion has been owing its relapse into impotence and insignificance, to your renovation must be
 “ owing its future freedom and its present tranquillity: you are therefore summoned to arms, in
 “ order to preserve your country in that guarded quiet, which may secure it from external hostility,
 “ and to maintain that internal regimen throughout the land, which, superseding a notorious po-
 “ lice, or a suspected militia, may preserve the blessings of peace by a vigilant preparation for war.
 “ Citizen soldiers, to arms, take up the shield of freedom and the pledges of peace—peace;
 “ the motive and end of your virtuous institution: war, an occasional duty, ought never to be
 “ made an occupation; every man should become a soldier in the defence of his rights; no man
 “ ought to continue a soldier for offending the rights of others; the sacrifice of life in the service
 “ of our country is a duty much too honourable to be intrusted to mercenaries; and at this time,
 “ when your country has, by public authority, been declared in danger, we conjure you by your
 “ interest, your duty, and your glory, to stand to your arms, and in spite of a police, in spite of a
 “ fencible militia, in virtue of two proclamations, to maintain good order in your vicinage, and
 “ tranquillity in Ireland; it is only by the military array of men in whom they confide, whom
 “ they have been accustomed to revere as the guardians of domestic peace, the protectors of their
 “ liberties and lives, that the present agitation of the people can be stilled, that tumult and licen-
 “ tiousness can be repressed, obedience secured to existing law, and a calm confidence diffused
 “ through the public mind in the speedy resurrection of a free constitution, of liberty and of
 “ equality, words which we use for an opportunity of repelling calumny, and of saying, that by
 “ liberty we never understood unlimited freedom, nor by equality the levelling of property, or the
 “ destruction of subordination: this is a calumny invented by that faction, or that gang, which
 “ misrepresents the king to the people, and the people to the king, traduces one half of the na-
 “ tion to cajole the other, and by keeping up distrust and division wishes to continue the proud
 “ arbitrators of the fortune and fate of Ireland; liberty is the exercise of all our rights, natural
 “ and political, secured to us and our posterity by a real representation of the people; and equality
 “ is the extension of the constituent to the fullest dimensions of the constitution, of the elective
 “ franchise to the whole body of the people, to the end, that government, which is collective power,
 “ may be guided by collective will, and that legislation may originate from public reason, keep
 “ pace with public improvement, and terminate in public happiness. If our constitution be im-
 “ perfect, nothing but a reform in representation will rectify its abuses; if it be perfect, nothing
 “ but the same reform will perpetuate its blessings. We now address you as citizens, for to be
 “ citizens you become soldiers; nor can we help wishing, that all soldiers partaking the passions
 “ and interest of the people would remember, that they were once citizens, that seduction made
 “ them soldiers, but nature made them men. We address you without any authority, save that of
 “ reason; and if we obtain the coincidence of public opinion, it is neither by force nor stratagem,
 “ for we have no power to terrify, no artifice to cajole, no fund to seduce; here we sit without
 “ mace or beadle, neither a mystery nor a craft, nor a corporation; in four words lies all our
 “ power—universal emancipation and representative legislature; yet we are confident, that on the
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vernment, and raising dangerous seditions and tumults within the kingdom of Ireland. To this information Mr. Rowan appeared by his attorney, and

“ pivot of this principle, a convention, still less—a society, still less—a single man, will be able first
 “ to move, and then to raise the world : we therefore wish for Catholic emancipation without any
 “ modification, but still we consider this necessary enfranchisement as merely the portal to the temple of national freedom ; wide as this entrance is, wide enough to admit three millions, it is
 “ narrow when compared to the capacity and comprehension of our beloved principle, which
 “ takes in every individual of the Irish nation, casts an equal eye over the whole island, embraces
 “ all that think, and feels for all that suffer : the Catholic cause is subordinate to our cause, and
 “ included in it ; for, as united Irishmen, we adhere to no sect, but to society ; to no cause, but
 “ Christianity ; to no party, but the whole people. In the sincerity of our souls do we desire
 “ Catholic emancipation ; but were it obtained to-morrow, to-morrow would we go on as we do
 “ to-day, in the pursuit of that reform, which would still be wanting to ratify their liberties as well
 “ as our own. For both these purposes it appears necessary, that provincial conventions should
 “ assemble preparatory to the convention of the Protestant people ; the delegates of the Catholic
 “ body are not justified in communicating with individuals, or even bodies of inferior authority,
 “ and therefore an assembly of a similar nature and organisation is necessary to establish an inter-
 “ course of sentiments, an uniformity of conduct, an united cause, and an united nation ; if a con-
 “ vention on the one part does not soon follow, and is not soon connected with that on the other,
 “ the common cause will split into the partial interest, the people will relapse into inattention
 “ and inertness, the union of affection and exertion will dissolve, and too probably some local
 “ insurrections, instigated by the malignity of our common enemy, may commit the character and
 “ risque the tranquillity of the island, which can be obviated only by the influence of an assembly
 “ arising from, assimilated with the people, and whose spirit may be, as it were, knit with the soul
 “ of the nation, unless the sense of the Protestant people be on their part as fairly collected,
 “ and as judiciously directed, unless individual exertion consolidates into collective strength, unless
 “ the parts unite into one mass ; we may perhaps serve some person or some party for a little, but
 “ the public not at all ; the nation is neither insolent, nor rebellious, nor seditious ; while it knows
 “ its rights, it is unwilling to manifest its powers ; it would rather supplicate administration to
 “ anticipate revolution by well-timed reform, and to save their country in mercy to themselves.
 “ The fifteenth of February approaches, a day ever memorable in the annals of this country as the
 “ birth-day of new Ireland ; let parochial meetings be held as soon as possible, let each parish re-
 “ turn delegates, let the sense of Ulster be again declared from Dungannon on a day auspicious to
 “ union, peace and freedom, and the spirit of the North will again become the spirit of the nation.
 “ The civil assembly ought to claim the attendance of the military associations, and we have addressed
 “ you, citizen soldiers, on this subject, from the belief, that your body uniting conviction with
 “ zeal, and zeal with activity, may have much influence over your countrymen, your relations
 “ and friends. We offer only a general outline to the public, and meaning to address Ireland,
 “ presume not at present to fill up the plan, or pre-occupy the mode of its execution ; we have
 “ thought it our duty to speak—answer us by actions ; you have taken time for consideration ;
 “ fourteen long years are elapsed since the rise of your associations ; and in 1782 did you imagine,
 “ that in 1792 this nation would still remain unrepresented ? How many nations, in this interval,
 “ have gotten the start of Ireland ? How many of your countrymen have sunk into the grave ?”

pleaded

pleaded the general issue. The trial came on the 29th of January, 1794, though the information had been filed as far back as the 8th of the preceding June. Upon calling over the jury one of them was objected against, as holding a place under the crown, but the attorney general insisted upon the illegality of the objection, and observed, that it went against all that was honorable and respectable in the land. It was therefore over-ruled by the court. After a trial of about ten hours, the jury found him guilty. This was very unexpected by Mr. Rowan's party. A motion was afterwards made in court to set aside the verdict, and grant a new trial grounded on several affidavits. The motion was argued for six days, and was at last discharged. The grounds, upon which the defendant's counsel rested their case, were 1. Upon the declaration of a juror against Mr. Rowan, viz. that the country would never be quiet till he was hanged or banished. 2. Upon the partiality of Mr. Giffard, the sheriff, who had so arrayed the panel as to have him tried by an unfair jury. 3. Upon the incredibility of one Lister, the chief and only witness against him: and 4. The misdirection of the court. The sentence of the court upon Mr. Rowan was to pay to his majesty a fine of 500*l.* and be imprisoned two years, to be computed from the 29th of January, 1794, and until the fine were paid, and to find security for his good behaviour for seven years, himself in 2000*l.* and two sureties in 1000*l.* each. The verdict and judgment of the court gave great dissatisfaction to the popular party. Their disapprobation of the verdict was expressed in court by the most indecent groans and hisses.

On the 21st of January, 1794, the parliament was convened, and the lord lieutenant in his speech from the throne expressed the highest satisfaction, that by the success of his majesty's arms, and those of his allies, the hopes of France, in their unprovoked declaration of war, to impair the stability or shake the constitution of Great Britain and Ireland, had been utterly disappointed.*

So

* " The forces of his majesty, and his allies, were in possession of many important fortresses, which had belonged to the French, and many of their oppressive and unjust conquests had been wrested from them; and while the trade of the empire had been generally protected, the resources which their enemies derived from their wealthy settlements and extensive commerce had been almost entirely cut off. He had the further satisfaction to acquaint them, that the spirit of insurrection, which had been for some time prevalent among the lower orders of the people, was in general suppressed, and no exertion should be wanting on his part to bring them to a due sense

So much had been done in the late busy session, that one single point only was debated in the present. On the 4th of March, Mr. W. Brabazon Ponsonby presented his promised bill,* for amending and improving the state of the representation of the people in parliament. The bill, which towards the close of the last sessions had been presented by his right honorable relative in his absence, had been received in such a manner as induced him to hope, that its principle met the approbation of the house. He knew not whether the country or the house had changed their opinion on the subject, for himself he certainly had not changed his opinion. One capital objection, which then existed against the measure, was now done away. The country was then in a state of disturbance, it was now in perfect tranquillity.

Having moved, that the bill should be read a second time on the morrow, Sir Hercules Langrishe, who had always been a determined enemy to every thing in the shape of reform, opposed it in a vehement harangue upon the fatal warning of France. It was impossible they should for a moment, under the existing circumstances, engage themselves in problematical experiments,

“ of order and subordination, and to prevent and punish the machinations of those, who might aim
“ to seduce them from their accustomed loyalty into acts of sedition and outrage.

“ The law for rendering a militia in that kingdom effectual had been carried successfully into
“ execution; and he was happy to find, that the people were at length fully reconciled to that
“ institution, which had already been attended by the most beneficial consequences, in producing
“ internal tranquillity, and contributing to the general strength and force of the empire. He also
“ had it in command to acquaint them, that his majesty had appointed a commission, under the
“ great seal, to execute the office of lord high treasurer of that kingdom, in order that the payment
“ of the civil list granted to his majesty, and a regular appropriation of the revenue to distinct ser-
“ vices, might be carried into execution in a manner as conformable to the practice of Great Bri-
“ tain, as the relative situation of this kingdom would permit.

“ His majesty had the fullest reliance upon the loyalty and attachment of his people of Ireland:
“ they were now, by the unjust aggression of France, involved in a contest for their religion, for
“ their constitution, and for the preservation of every principle which upheld social order, or gave
“ security to their persons or properties. In such a cause, his majesty had no doubt of being cor-
“ dially supported by the efforts of all his subjects, in resisting the desperate designs of men, who
“ were endeavouring to erect their own power and dominion on the ruins of law and order, and to
“ involve every government of Europe in a general scene of confusion and anarchy.

“ His majesty’s object was peace, and he would exert himself, in conjunction with his allies,
“ whenever an occasion should present itself, for obtaining that desirable end, without surrendering
“ the honor of his crown, or sacrificing the present or future security of his people and the rest of
“ Europe.”

* The form of this bill is to be seen in the Appendix, No. XCVII.

on a constitution, which they knew was competent to all the ends of civil liberty and progressive happiness: that they should turn the minds of the people from the duties of a critical situation: that they should, as it were, tamper with turbulence, and favor disquisitions, which would make the people politicians instead of husbandmen, and agitators instead of defenders of their country: the objections to the bill itself, though great and numerous, were lost in the predominant objection to their agitating the question at all at that time. It was incompetent to the end proposed, and would be utterly unsatisfactory to the people it professed to gratify; it did not improve or extend the basis of representation, it rendered the representation of the people still more unequal; and on the whole it was a transfer of power, and not a reform in parliament. The House of Commons, constituted and composed as it was, had for several years past been engaged in the uniform practice, session after session, of adding some new protection to constitutional liberty, some new advancement to the prosperity of the country; and that to hazard such a condition of progressive happiness in the lottery of experiment or adventure, would at all times be rashness, and at that time insatiation. Under such impressions, he wished to put an end to the discussion, moved, "That the bill be read a second time on the 1st of August."

Mr. Grattan observed, that if France were to be a lesson, they should take the whole of that lesson; if her frantic convention be a monitress against the vices of a republic, let the causes which produced that convention be an admonition against the abuses of monarchy. France would reform nothing until abuses accumulated, and government was swept away in a deluge, until an armed force redressed the state, and then, as will be generally the case, united on becoming the government. It was not a progress from reformation to innovation, but from one modification of a military government, that is, of one anarchy to another; in principle, therefore, the case of France did not apply, in policy still less; for if there were an attempt to introduce the rebellious graces of a republic into these countries, the best precaution was to discountenance them by the sober attractions of a limited monarchy, and the worst precaution was to preserve all the abuses of the latter, to pre-engage men against the vices of the former.

Several other gentlemen spoke largely and warmly upon the subject. Sir Lawrence Parsons was violent for the bill; he would not give a silent vote, though he very pertinently observed, that whatever might be said that night
upon

upon the subject, would not make the people less desirous to obtain a reform on one side, or the majority of that house more willing to adopt it on the other.* About midnight they divided upon Sir Hercules Langrishe's motion for reading the bill on the 2d of August, when there appeared for it 142, against it 44. Thus ended the cause of parliamentary reform.

The 25th of March put an end to this jejune session of parliament. His excellency's speech to both houses was expressive of the cordial pleasure his majesty felt in the loyalty of his people of Ireland, and the affectionate determination they had always shewn to stand or fall with Great Britain. In the contest, in which they were engaged, by the unprovoked aggression of France, measures of the most vigorous nature continued to be requisite, and his majesty would persevere in his exertions, in conjunction with his allies, against the common enemy.

He applauded their wisdom in passing an act for preserving the property within that kingdom of persons resident in France from becoming the plunder of those who had usurped the government of that unhappy country. It was particularly their duty to support the security of private property, and to maintain the principles of justice, when doctrines had been advanced, and attempts endeavoured to be carried into execution for the destruction of both.

He was sorry to inform them, that in some parts of the county of Cork, the people, deluded by the artifices of wicked and designing men, had assembled in numerous bodies, and had compelled many to take unlawful oaths. The timely exertions of the magistrates, aided by the spirited conduct of his majesty's regular militia forces, had nearly suppressed those disturbances. No attention should be wanting on his part to the protection of the peaceable and industrious, and to the punishment of offenders against the law, and especially of those, who had instigated the ignorant to the commission of such dangerous crimes.

In the warmth of party it has too frequently been a practice to attempt to identify their political opponents with the most degraded and wicked of the community; this practice is malevolent and mischievous in the extreme. It then was and unfortunately since has been the study of a certain description of persons in Ireland, and some of no mean pretensions, to connect the

* 14 Parl. Deb. p. 100.

views, spirit and principles of the minority in parliament and the Whig club with the societies of United Irishmen, and other such popular institutions. A notable instance of their radical difference occurred in the course of this session. The society of United Irishmen of Dublin had amongst other publications upon the subject of parliamentary reform strongly inculcated the necessity of annual parliaments and universal suffrage; which Mr. Grattan, in his speech upon Mr. Ponsonby's bill, most severely reprobated* and exposed to derision and scorn.

It

* 14 Parl. Deb. p. 80. "Worse even than the abuses so defended is a plan I have seen for their reformation—personal or individual representation.

"The principle of such a plan is a complete, avowed, and unqualified departure from the vital and fundamental article of the British constitution, in practice and in theory; and I must say, such an outset requires no small degree of mischievous and senseless temerity. With equal folly does this plan violate the dearest rights of man, for if there be one right of man intirely indisputable, it is that which gives to the individual in particular, and the community in general, the fruits of his and their industry; thus the passenger through your field, or the labourer on your farm, has no right to make rules for the management of the same, nor have the aggregate of labourers or of non-proprietors a right to make rules or ordinances for the land, farms, or trade of the community.

"This reasoning applies very strongly to the case of Ireland, because it appeared on the hearth-money survey of the last year, that those who were to be exempted from the hearth-money for want of property were more than half of our inhabitants. It was besides insisted on by the objectors to reform on the principle of property, that such a principle excluded the majority; it follows, that the plan, which gives votes to all the inhabitants, and gives away to that majority the fruits of the industry of the community, gives away the estate of the landholder, the farm of the freeholder, the lease of the leaseholder, and the trade of the citizen, to be ordered and disposed of by a majority, who are confessed to have neither estate, nor farm, nor lease, nor trade. That is the plan that robs the individual and the community of the fruits of their industry, and destroys the representation of property. Under the pretence of establishing a representation of existence, it destroys a principle which is real and sacred, to establish a concert which is affected and nonsensical.

"But it is not merely to those who have neither farm, freehold, nor trade, that this plan extends the right of voting,—it gives the return of members to serve in parliament to all the common soldiers, to the resident army, horse, foot and dragoons—to the police—to the scavenger. It goes farther, it gives that right to all hospitals—to almsmen—to Channel row—and every beggar-man in the kingdom of Ireland. It goes farther, it gives that right to every criminal—white boys that break laws, and defenders who steal arms; and would thus present you with a representation of felony as well as of paupers. To such a monstrous constitution, whose frenzy, folly, and wickedness, must excite at once your scorn and horror, the objection is not
"merely

It appears from an address of this society to the people of Ireland, which was published as widely as possible, what their avowed sentiments were of the gentlemen

“ merely that such persons would be represented, but the persons who have no property in land, lease, freehold, or trade, being confessedly the majority, it follows under such a plan that such persons alone would be represented, and that the landholder, leaseholder, farmer and tradesman, confessedly the minority with their one vote only, this plan allows them no more, would not be represented at all; it follows, that those who have nothing in land, lease, farm, or trade, would return the parliament; that is, those who had nothing in the common stock would make the laws, and the men who receive alms would vote the taxes. You held the Catholic to be a slave when his property was taxed without his consent by the Protestant; the plan of personal representation does away the franchise of the Catholic bill, and taxes both Protestant and Catholic without the consent of either, by introducing a new set of voters who shall out-number both; a body who have not with respect to you, like the Catholics in property, a common, but have a distinct and opposite interest, and are not politically the same, but essentially different; a body which puts nothing into the common stock, and is to take every thing out of it; some of them are the objects of your charity, others the objects of your justice, and all of them now invited to become instruments of mischief and members of government. A plan, which insults the beggar with a power in the state, and which robs the people of their influence in the constitution, which goes against the rights of man and the principles of the British constitution, which destroys all the counties; which takes away from every citizen and freeholder one vote by regulation, and -extinguishes by the voice and votes of the multitude the effect of the other; and which by its direct and indirect operation, taken together, disfranchises all the property in the kingdom, with such electors as have none, and whose condition alone however subdivided their multitude, would make an election a riot; with such an unqualified rout the plan of personal representation becomes more alarming by doubling the number of electors and making the parliament annual; that is, by diminishing the franchise and doubling the confusion, afterward making that confusion eternal, so that instead of 150 elections once in eight years, we should have every year 300 elections.

“ Suppose a potwalloping borough without even the restraint of a potwalloping qualification; suppose an election, of which Swords gives you an orderly and tranquil image, multiplied into 300 instances, and blazing out every year at the same moment in every part of the kingdom; trade, industry, government, order, liberty, external consequence and internal repose, in short, young Ireland what must be your lot, while the business of your legislation, your trade and your agriculture stand still to give way to this universal canvas and universal disorder, to this permanent intoxication and revolutionary riot?

“ To destroy the influence of landed property is the object of individual representation, but its immediate effect would be to extinguish the people. The rich might for a time make a struggle; they might in some places buy a mob, who by such a plan would be all electors; they might beset the hustings with their retainers, who by such a plan would be all electors, or they might purchase the votes of that great body of electors introduced by such a plan into the constitution, all the beggars in the neighbourhood. The minister too, for the short time such a plan suffered
“ king

gentlemen of the opposition, and particularly of Mr. Grattan, the leader of that party. Hitherto the United Irishmen were bounden by no secret oath, nor any criminal or illegal tie. Their address was published ten days after the debate on the introduction of Mr. Ponsonby's bill of reform. They first gave a specimen of their own doctrines upon the subject, they then very freely express their opinions of Mr. Grattan, and the minority in parliament.

" It is said, that the lower classes of the community, being without property, have no stake in the country, and therefore ought not to vote for any part of the legislature. In consequence of the representative system every man is supposed to be either individually or by his delegate, a party to making the laws by which he is to be bound. The elective right cannot therefore be denied, on constitutional principle, to any one: even the poorest should be allowed the exercise of that right, as they are bound by law as well as others.

" Laws operate on life, liberty, and property. Why is property represented? because it is valuable to the possessor, and may be affected by the law. Why should liberty and life not be represented? Are they not more

" king or minister, could, in the corrupt confusion of such election, preserve some influence by the application of the treasury and the command of the army, he could have all the swords and votes of all the common foldiers. But the farmer and the citizen could have none of those advantages, and indeed what farmer or citizen would go to the hustings of a medley of offenders met on a plan, where bayonets, bludgeons and whisky, elected the House of Commons? In the mean time the respect which the landlord and candidate now pay to the farmer and to the citizen would be at an end, and instead of resorting to the farmer for his vote and interest, the squire would go to the farmer's dung-yard and canvas the boys of his lawn, who would have more votes, though neither farm nor freehold; the consequence of the citizen would be at an end also, and instead of going to his shop to ask the tradesman for his vote, the candidate would apply to the beggar on the bridge, or the scavenger in the kennel, or to the hospitals or Channel-row, and those places where the poor are now wisely supplied with bread, instead of being intoxicated with hand-bills, offering, in the place of bread, the hopes of returning the parliament, and becoming a third constitutive part of the legislature.

" Such would be the state of election under this plan of personal representation, which from a revolution of power would speedily lead to a revolution of property, and become a plan of plunder as well as a scene of confusion; for if you transfer the power of the state to those who have nothing in the country, they will afterwards transfer the property, and annex it once more to the power in their own persons; give them your power and they will give themselves your property; of such a representation as this plan would provide, the first ordinance would be robbery, accompanied with the circumstance incidental to robbery—murder."

“ valuable to their possessor, and may they not also be affected by the law?
 “ Since liberty and life are the most important objects of legislation, the
 “ poorer class have a right to some controul over the legislature, and it is
 “ just they should exercise it. The spirit of many of our laws is aristocratic,
 “ and by no means calculated for the protection of the poor.

“ If the lower classes of the community had been represented in parliament, when their necessities first urged them to insurrection and outrage, under the denomination of White Boys and Defenders, parliament would have enquired into and redressed their grievances, instead of making laws to punish them with death.

“ The poorest man in the land pays taxes for his fire, his candle, for his potatoes and cloathing; and the poorer he is, the greater occasion he has for a vote to protect what little he has, which is necessary not to his qualification merely, but to his very existence. He has a property in his labour, and in the value it will bring in the market, the field, or the manufactory; a property, on account of its smallness, of more real value to him than thousands of pounds to the rich and luxurious; a property, which must render him more interested in the honest disposal of the public money, since one additional tax may crush him, than those can be who receive that public money by virtue of places without employment, and pension without merit.

“ Property is merely the collection of labour, it possesses the very same qualities before, as after it is collected into a heap; and the labour of the lowest rank is as real, and ought to be as really represented as the most fixed and solid property.

“ Opposition seemed surpris'd, that the people should view their debates with indifference. We will tell them the reason. It is because nothing passes of a nature to animate and interest that people. Nothing from which an individual can promise himself more happiness, or the community more splendour; it is because enthusiasm no longer lights up the countenance of Grattan, and swells every heart with something great and good, and with a prospect of something greater and better; it is because there appears no internal spring of action, no fixture of character! but good and bad qualities, as it were external; and neither virtues nor vices of their own. It is because once in seven years the people are treated as majesty, and in the interval mal-treated as mob.

“ We

“ We have not in our plan of reform paled so little parks of aristocracy.
 “ Our plan has not been described with a pair of compasses, nor have we
 “ defaced with childish circles the system of nature, and the chart of the
 “ constitution. There is no truth in any political system, in which the
 “ sun of liberty is not placed in the centre, with knowledge to enlighten,
 “ and benevolence to warm and invigorate; with the same ray to gild the
 “ palace and illuminate the cottage.

“ Sooner or later the measure must come. The eternal principle of justice
 will be repeated in louder and louder tones, until at length it must be
 “ heard and observed. Why not now? Why leave behind a source of new
 “ reforms, perhaps, of convulsions?

“ Contemplating this grateful prospect, we smile with much internal
 “ satisfaction, on hearing those intemperate and abusive expressions, which
 “ the members of opposition make use of against this society. We smile at
 “ their inability to conceal the vexation and disappointment they have felt
 “ on finding themselves forsaken by the people (that people, whose majesty
 “ they insult, but whose forbearance they at some times solicit); on finding
 “ themselves falling, like the ostentatious balloon, from that height, to which
 “ they had arisen by a sort of inflammable levity, and there sustained by the
 “ breath of popular favour.

“ We smile at the curious coalition of political parties against our society;
 “ to see them all club their wisdom and their wit to manifest to the whole
 “ country, that we are really formidable; but we are rather inclined to
 “ pity that forced fraternity, that monstrous conjunction, which, in spite of
 “ the horror of instinct, and the antipathy of nature, can join in one common
 “ effort the highest genius with the lowest ribaldry; how great must be the
 “ panic that can unite such extremes! We can bear, as we have borne,
 “ the common place invective against this society; but we feel some indig-
 “ nation, when they, who should look on themselves as the purchased pro-
 “ perty of the people; to whose fortune every man, even ‘ the beggar on
 “ the bridge,’ has contributed; whom the ‘ shouts of the mob’ have raised
 “ to the height of their fame; when such men inveigh against armed beggary
 “ and shabby sedition; we cannot but remember a time, when the usual
 “ adjunct to their own names was ‘ shabby and seditious incendiaries.’ It
 “ is not manly, it is not decorous to deal out this contumelious language
 “ against the great mass of mankind. The use of contemptuous terms dis-

“ poses to contemptuous treatment, and those, whom we vilify as mob, we
 “ soon learn to flight as men. It is the unequal partition of rights: and what
 “ results from this? The arrogance of power, and the abasement of poverty,
 “ which make mob, instigate to tumult, and goad to insurrection.

“ If the people were respected, they would reverence the constituted autho-
 “ rities; but to gain this respect, they must possess those rights, which are
 “ the prerogative of their nature, and the worth of manhood.”

Whatever were the various and immediate causes of the growth and extension of that turbulent and seditious spirit, which agitated the kingdom during the year 1794, certain it is, that defenderism spread rapidly, the Right Boys gained confidence, and became systematic in their outrages, and the United Irishmen assumed a tone of political language, that shocked the steady supporters of constitutional freedom, and gave but too plausible a handle to their enemies to fasten upon them intentions and views, which at that time the society actually had not, whatever may have been the ultimate suppressed designs of some few of their body. It would be unjust to stain the conduct of thousands in their efforts to attain a lawful end with the guilt of some few, who afterwards ran into excesses, the tendency to which they either totally suppressed from others, or were at the time insensible of themselves. Yet hitherto, the Defenders, the Right Boys, and United Irishmen were in principle and conduct essentially different from each other. As early as the month of February 1794, a numerous body of the Right Boys assembled near Bandon in the county of Cork, and swore several persons not to pay tithes, taxes, or hearth-money. They went so far as to threaten to attack the town of Bandon: and in the next month they dispersed a body of police men assembled by a magistrate: at another time they attacked a party of the Carlow militia and wounded a magistrate, whilst he was reading the riot act. The Defenders, became daily more numerous and extended their depredations into the counties of Dublin, Kildare, Westmeath, Longford, Cavan, Leitrim, and a part of Down. They had now laid aside their original principle of defence, and had become outrageous aggressors; still under the pretence of searching for arms in self defence. Their nocturnal visits were terrific: they not only plundered houses of their arms, but took whatever money and portable effects of value, they could find; and not unfrequently committed severe outrages upon the inhabitants. No one of any property, consequence, or character was ever found to belong to or to be connected with these lawless banditti: they were
 still

fill of the lowest and most desperate orders of society; enemies of course to all that possessed property, character, and an interest in the preservation of the community. In the county of Longford, and elsewhere, the nobility, clergy, and freeholders united, resolved to levy money by subscription for raising and maintaining a body of horse for their defence, and obtained permission from the viceroy so to do. Meetings and resolutions of a similar tendency became frequent and were attended with happy effects.

It was observable, that the society of United Irishmen of Dublin became more daring after the confinement of Mr. H. Rowan. They had great confidence in him, and he commanded very extensive influence upon them. From that time they rose in their tone and sentiments upon all political subjects. His escape out of prison on the 1st of May, 1794, made a very deep, though very opposite impression upon different parts of the nation. 1000*l.* reward was offered for apprehending him;* for after his committal to

* “ By the Lord Lieutenant and Council of Ireland. A Proclamation.

“ WESTMORLAND.

“ WHEREAS, Archibald Hamilton Rowan, late of Rathcoffey, in the county of Kildare, Esq. was, in the last Hilary term, committed to the gaol of Newgate, in the city of Dublin, under a sentence of the court of King's Bench, of imprisonment for two years, for publishing a seditious libel.

“ And whereas the said Archibald Hamilton Rowan has lately been charged with high treason; and whereas we have received information on oath, that the said Archibald Hamilton Rowan did on the night of Thursday, the 1st day of May, make his escape from said gaol.

“ Now we, the lord lieutenant and council being determined to bring the said Archibald Hamilton Rowan to condign punishment, do hereby offer a reward of one thousand pounds to any person or persons who shall discover and apprehend the said A. H. Rowan, wherever he may be found, or so discover the said A. H. Rowan that he may be apprehended and committed to prison.

“ And we do hereby strictly charge and command all justices of the peace, mayors, sheriffs, bailiffs, constables, and all other his majesty's loving subjects, to use their utmost diligence in apprehending the said Archibald Hamilton Rowan.

“ Given at the council chamber in Dublin, the 2d of May 1794.

R. Dublin	Clonmell	H. Langrishe
Chas. Cashel	Ely	Theo. Jones
Clanricarde	Dillon	W. Conyngham
Shannon	G. L. Kildare	R. Cunningham
Beftive	Muskerry	J. Cuff
Glandore	Carleton	J. M. Mason
Carhampton	B. Yelverton	A. Wolfe
Mount Norris	H. Cavendish	J. Fitzgerald.

“ GOD SAVE THE KING.”

Newgate

Newgate for the seditious libel in Hilary term, he had been charged with high treason. About the same time, viz. on the 28th of April, 1794, the Reverend Mr. Jackson, a Protestant clergyman, was committed to Newgate on a charge of high treason. Popular discontent encreased through the nation from a variety of causes. Notwithstanding government had in the session of 1793, passed several good and popular acts, they had thereby acquired but a small, if any, encrease of popularity. Their rejection of the question of reform had produced nothing but displeasure out of doors: at that time the people at large were all for reform: some for universal suffrage, most for a qualified and temperate improvement of the representation of the people in parliament. Upon the whole two great objects of political attainment now occupied the public mind; parliamentary reform and Catholic emancipation. Most persons out of parliament were common advocates for both objects, each tending to promote and improve the other. Such for several years had been the rage for politics in Ireland, that it was rare to find an individual in the nation, who had not ranged himself on one side or the other of the contending parties. The government party in parliament of course drew to it all persons throughout the kingdom, who in any manner received favors from them. But in as much as that interest was generally considered an English interest, it met with few independent Irishmen, who did not systematically oppose it. Of the real sense of the people upon these two important objects there could at that time be no question of doubt. Above three out of four millions essentially were for Catholic emancipation; as so many individuals would be thereby emancipated: out of the remaining million above 500,000 were Dissenters, and the great bulk of that body avowedly were for the measure: of the remainder of the population who were Protestants of the established church, the great landed interests of the country in parliament with their proportionate number of Protestant friends and dependents were also warm advocates for the measure of Catholic emancipation. As for parliamentary reform the actual number of its advocates was certainly smaller, than for the other measure: but they were more vehement in their efforts and less circumspect in the means of attaining their object. The accomplishment of it threatened the more sure and immediate overthrow of that system of government patronage, by which the opposers of both measures were knit together in a common cause of resistance. Some of the Catholics were as warm in the cause of reform, as their Protestant brethren, and they

they openly avowed their sentiments: many of them conceiving that government was against that measure, and fatally knowing the weight of government in determining their own question, either harboured opposite, or disguised, or suppressed their real opinions upon that subject.

Nothing leads more directly to misrepresentation, than the confusion of times with the actions of particular persons: crimes have their dates: and though the progress to consummation be gradual and sometimes imperceptible, yet the criminal volition is generally to be traced to its source. The retention of the term or title of *United Irishmen* has been productive of much misconception and much misrepresentation concerning the principles and conduct of the individuals known at different periods under that common denomination.*

The term *Irish Union* has been more maliciously, than artfully used to asperse the characters of the first united Irishmen of Dublin, with the guilt of the latter rebellious members of the Irish union. They were separate and

* An author, whose study seems to have been that of criminating his countrymen, speaking of this society on the 23d of May, 1794, when they were dispersed by the sheriffs from their meeting in Back Lane, said (*Mem. p. 127.*) “ they continued afterwards to sit, and to carry on their nefarious machinations with secrecy, but with equal effect. It appeared afterwards, that many of the leaders of the Catholic committee were members of the society of United Irishmen, though they artfully concealed themselves while that body openly avowed its existence, and published its proceedings; having left the obnoxious and dangerous part to the Protestants, who, though few in number, served as scape goats to draw on them the vengeance of the law, and the detestation of all good men and loyal subjects.

“ I give the reader the names of some of the Protestant leaders, with the fate which befel them.
 “ Theobald Wolfe Tone, convicted, but cut his throat “ *Henry Sheares
 “ Hon. S. Butler, died in extreme poverty in Wales “ *John Sheares
 “ James Napper Tandy, fled “ †Joseph Levins
 “ *Henry Sheares “ †William Levingston Webb
 “ †Archibald Hamilton Rowan “ †Henry Jackson
 “ Oliver Bond convicted of high treason but died in “ †Matthew Dowling
 “ prison “ †James Reynolds
 “ *Beauchamp B. Harvey “ †Thomas A. Emmett
 “ †Thomas Ruffel “ †John Burke
 “ †Arthur O'Connor “ †Hugh Wilson
 “ †Roger O'Connor “ †Robert Sims, proprietor of the North Star
 “ †Samuel Neilson “ †Edward Hudson
 “ †John Chambers

“ * Were hanged.

“ † Exiles.”

distinct

distinct societies : their principles, objects, and engagements were different. The one was extinct, before the other existed. The leading traits of the latter were separation from Great Britain and republicanism. It now appears unquestionable, that whilst that first society existed, neither of those objects ever became a subject of discussion, debate, or even conversation amongst them. Their views and actions were simply commensurate with their test ; and it is not unreasonably apprehended, that those very terms of their union rendered them so peculiarly obnoxious to the friends of Protestant ascendancy and unequal representation. The difficulty of attaining any species of parliamentary reform strengthened their conviction of the necessity of the measure, and brought them gradually to those violent expressions, and that extraordinary proposal of endeavouring at some future, though undetermined time to procure the meeting of a convention at Athlone, which should take into consideration the best mode of effecting a reform in parliament. They conceived, that such a meeting, backed, as they presumed it would be by Catholic and Protestant, could not fail of success. Hitherto they went no farther, than parliamentary reform, though upon the broadest basis of universal suffrage and annual parliaments. To this they were driven by the increasing spirit of liberty, encouraged by the successful progress of the French revolution, and not slightly provoked by their diffidence in the sincerity of some of the leading members of the opposition in the cause of reform. This latter motive worked particularly upon the society after Mr. Grattan's severe reprobation of their system of reform in the House of Commons. The rage for political discussion, the passing of the convention bill, and the rejection of the question of reform, coupled with the confinement of Mr. H. Rowan, his subsequent charge of high treason, the committal of Mr. Jackson for the like offence, supposed to be implicated with him in the same treason, the forcible dissolution of the society, all tended to dispose some of the most violent members to carry their thoughts beyond the words or meaning of their test or original institution. Aware of having brought upon themselves their own destruction by the openness of their discussion and publicity of their proceedings, those who had further views set their minds upon forming new societies upon the basis of secrecy, which gave rise to that *Irish Union*, whose proceedings and progress it will be our duty to detail.

Towards the end of the year 1794, the turbulent state of the country had so alarmed the government, that the British cabinet had found it necessary

to

to remove the Earl of Westmorland, who had either brought or permitted the kingdom to be brought to that deplorable situation. It was allowed on all hands, that the officers of the crown were unable with their utmost rigor to restore tranquillity. The premier was particularly affected with this melancholy prospect of the sister kingdom: the continuance of an expensive war rendered Ireland a peculiar object of his most serious speculations, not only for recruiting and victualling the army and navy, but also for aiding the finance. He had formed the project of calling upon the Irish parliament to raise such a sum of money, as had never been voted in that country: and he well knew the liberal and grateful disposition of the Irish, whom justice and kindness would bring to any concession or sacrifice whatever. He saw it necessary to abandon the system of coercion, and to adopt healing measures by forming a popular administration, which should by prudent concession attach the affections, that were likely to be estranged from the cause of the empire by a continuance of coercive severity. No man was ever more sensible of the importance of Ireland to the British empire than Mr. Pitt: no man was ever more intimately convinced, that justice, liberality, and kindness to the Irish could alone ensure the full energies and powers of that people, in the cordial service of the British empire.

In order to account for the change in the Irish administration, it is requisite to recur to the extraordinary movements, which had previously taken place in the administration of Great Britain. The formal accession of a very large part of the Rockingham party to the minister, in the month of July, 1794, was an event differently viewed, and differently accounted for by the several persons, who undertook to consider it according to their respective sentiments at that critical period.* It was an event big with more importance,

* So widely different are the opinions of what Mr. Burke called the Old and the New Whigs upon this singular event, that no narrative can acquire credit, but the evidence of the parties themselves. Lord Fitzwilliam, speaking of the war with France, which had been expressly undertaken, though in his opinion too tardily, to restore order to France, and effect the destruction of the abominable system, that prevailed in that country, said (45 P. D. p. 183) "Upon this understanding it was, that he had separated from some of those, with whom he had long acted in politics, and with other noble friends had lent his aid to his majesty's ministers: upon this understanding he had filled that situation, which he had some time since held in his majesty's cabinet." To the war-question alone did the Duke of Portland refer his motives for supporting the ministers. (39 P. D. p. 13) "He had at the beginning acknowledged his opinion of the justice and necessity of the

importance, than any in the modern history of the British empire. In the House of Lords, the Duke of Portland, Earls Fitzwilliam, Spencer, and other leaders of the Rockingham party; in the commons, Messrs. Burke, Wyndham, and many of that party, brought so much accession of strength to the minister, that those who remained staunch to all their original principles, and were neither allured, persuaded, nor intimidated to change their principles or conduct, were not without some acrimonious petulancy termed by Mr. Burke the dwindled phalanx of opposition. These new supporters of the ministers, like all profelytes, shewed extraordinary fervor in the cause, which had worked their conversion. In the month of July, 1794, they were admitted into a coalition of power: an arrangement of such magnitude required much time to settle, after the parties had formally ranged themselves in the ministerial ranks. The Duke of Portland was gaeed with a blue ribbon, and created a third Secretary of State;* Earl Fitzwilliam was made President of the Council; Lord Spencer, Privy Seal; Mr. Wyndham, Secretary at War; and the Earl of Mansfield a member extraordinary of the cabinet. The public was informed by Mr. Ponsonby in the Irish House of Commons,† that the coalition between the Duke of Portland and Mr. Pitt

“ war, and he was then (Jan. 1794) more convinced of both. He thought it the duty of every
 “ man to concur in strengthening the hand of government, as a vigorous prosecution of the war
 “ appeared to him the only means of saving the country, and bringing the war to an honorable
 “ and favourable issue. He should therefore give his support to ministers.” Of this support Mr. Pelham thus expressed himself in the Irish House of Commons on the 21st of April, 1795. (15 P. D. p. 184) “ As a friend of the Duke of Portland, he took the liberty of saying, that his grace and his
 “ friends after having long opposed Mr. Pitt on principle did on principle at length support him,
 “ (and p. 190) and as like men they opposed him on principle, so now like men they supported
 “ him on principle, and they shared in office, that they might share in responsibility.” I have alluded to these avowals of some out of the many of the Rockingham party, who at that time gave their support to government, merely to shew the grounds of that change, which affected the question of war exclusively. Some of them did, and all of them professed to retain their former principles upon all matters of internal regulation unconnected with the war. One prominent object, upon which they professed to maintain their old principles and feelings, was the establishment of a fair and firm government in Ireland.

* Of a similar creation Mr. Burke once said (speech on œconomy bill) “ it was made for the
 “ mere convenience of the arrangements of political intrigue, and not for the service of the state :
 “ it was made in order to give a color to an exorbitant increase of the civil list, and in the same
 “ act to bring a new accession to the loaded compost heap of corrupt influence.”

† 15 Parl. Deb. p. 184.

would

would never have taken place, had not his grace received ample authority to reform the abuses, which existed in the Irish government: but Mr. Pelham repeated twice in that debate, that they had coalesced without any stipulation whatsoever. Upon this important fact, there is however the very strong testimony of the noble lord himself, that has hitherto been uncontradicted, notwithstanding the numerous debates and publications upon this delicate and important subject.* “When the Duke of Portland and his friends were to be entered into a coalition with Mr. Pitt’s administration, it was necessary to hold out such allures, as would make the coalition palatable, or even possible for them to accede to. If the general management and superintendence of Ireland had not been offered to his grace, that coalition could never have taken place; the sentiments that he entertained, and the language he had held so publicly, for years back, on the subject, rendered the superintendence of Irish affairs a point, that could not be dispensed with by him. It was become of absolute necessity, that it should be transferred to his management; and accordingly, it was offered from the beginning of the negotiation, as was also the home department of Secretary of State. Ask the Duke of Portland when he accepted the management of Ireland, if he did it under any restrictions whatever. Ask him, if he pressed it upon me under any, and if he did not propose and recommend to me to lay out immediately for making such arrangements in the government, as would enable me to restore peace, tranquillity, and order in the country; and as would reconcile the general mass of the people to its government.

“But the instant we had proclaimed our acceptance of office, then the scene began to open; then it was first discovered, that the object of all this mighty work was not to strengthen administration by an accession of character, but to debase, degrade, and disgrace that character. No sooner had I declared my acceptance of the lieutenancy of Ireland, than delay interposed, and soon doubts and difficulties arose. It is a matter of public notoriety in this country, that Mr. Pitt assured Lord Wellesford, as early as August, that he should not be removed; and I know, that I could bring evidence to prove, that, in the course of the autumn, he pointed out Lord Camden as the person, who he intended should succeed my predecessor.

“So fully determined was the British cabinet to bring forward the question

* Lord Fitzwilliam’s Letter to Lord Carlisle.

of Catholic emancipation in the next session of parliament, that on the day of the Duke of Portland's kissing hands, which was in July, 1794, that measure was adopted." It then was generally believed in Ireland, that the government of that country would be again committed to his grace: and all the old friends with whom he had acted, when he was lord lieutenant before, and whom it was concluded, he would again call to his councils, expressed their full conviction, that a full and complete emancipation was intended; and we have the express authority of that respectable though short-lived viceroy, that he knew his grace's opinions at that time coincided with those of his Irish friends. In order to the settlement of these new arrangements, Mr. Ponsonby and Mr. Grattan were sent for to England; and the particular marshalling of the treasury bench was settled by Sir John Parnell and Mr. Pitt. From the first idea of new modelling the government of Ireland, it had been the intention of the Duke of Portland, that Mr. Ponsonby should be the attorney general, and therefore his grace desired Lord Fitzwilliam would send for him to England* to consult upon the arrangement and plan of his government: and Mr. Pitt also admitted him several times to consultations upon their arrangements of measures. The convention bill, which had passed in the preceding session, had put an end to any further meetings by delegation: but several friends and supporters of particular favorite objects, such as Catholic emancipation and parliamentary reform, held frequent and very numerous meetings, to consult upon the means of effectuating their wishes: the want of delegation increased the numbers of the individuals, who took part in these consultations. The effect of them with reference to the Catholic question, was a thorough reconciliation of the whole body, and a vigorous co-operation in the common cause of complete emancipation and equalization with their Protestant brethren.† The universally credited report of the patronage

* Lord Fitzwilliam's Letter to Lord Carlisle.

† Lord Fitzwilliam in the letter before cited informs us, that from the 8th of January (he landed on the 4th) he unremittingly applied himself to the collecting of further information. "I had heard," said he, "that the committee had prepared an address for me; before I should receive it, I wished to know the opinion of those, whom the committee called seceders, the noblemen and principal landed gentlemen of that persuasion.

"In a letter of the 15th of January, I acquainted the secretary of state of the result of these enquiries, and of the progress of the business subsequent to my former letters. I told him, that, in the absence of the nobleman, who was considered as the head of the seceders, I had sent for a person of the most tried and acknowledged moderation amongst them, and of the first consequence
"and

patronage and government of Ireland falling unto the Duke of Portland and his friends, raised their confidence to conviction, that what had in the preceding session been lost by a vast majority, would, when backed by government, be carried with perfect unanimity, unless the two opposers of their bill in 1793 should still persist in their inveteracy. Under these strong prepossessions, after much deliberation it was found to be the unanimous sense of the Catholic body to commit their cause to the talents, zeal, and long-tried sincerity of Mr. Grattan: and in December, 1794, a resolution to that effect was published,* and their example was followed up by most districts in the

“ and property. I found by him (what the nobleman above alluded to afterwards confirmed) that
 “ he, and every person of his description, were in perfect unison with the committee; that they
 “ all decidedly looked to the same object; that they were determined never to lose sight of it; that
 “ provided it should be obtained, they had no objection that Mr. Byrne, or any other member of
 “ the committee, should have the honor of taking the lead in it.”

* CATHOLICS OF DUBLIN.

At a numerous and respectable meeting of the Catholics of the city of Dublin, held at the Star and Garter, in Essex Street, on Tuesday, December the 23d, 1794,

EDWARD BYRNE, Esq. in the Chair,

Mr. Richard M'Cormick having been requested to act as secretary to the meeting, the following resolutions were unanimously agreed to, and ordered to be published:

“ *Resolved* unanimously, That it is the opinion of this meeting, that an humble application be
 “ made to parliament, in the ensuing session, praying for a total repeal of the penal and restrictive
 “ laws, still affecting the Catholics of Ireland.

“ *Resolved* unanimously, That a committee of nine be appointed to prepare a petition to that
 “ effect, and report the same to this meeting forthwith; and the following gentlemen were named
 “ on said committee:

“ Mr. Byrne, Mr. Braughall, Mr. Sweetman, Mr. M'Cormick, Dr. Ryan, Mr. M'Neven,
 “ Mr. Hamill, Mr. Keogh. And the said gentlemen having reported, and the petition so prepared
 “ being read over, paragraph by paragraph, and agreed to, it was

“ *Resolved* unanimously, That we do recommend said petition to be adopted as the petition of
 “ the Catholics of the city of Dublin.

“ *Resolved* unanimously, That we do most earnestly recommend to the Catholics of Ireland, to
 “ prepare and transmit similar petitions; and that, in order thereto, the gentlemen above named
 “ be instructed to take the most speedy and effectual steps, for circulating copies of this day's pro-
 “ ceedings through the different counties and great cities throughout the kingdom, and also the
 “ several parishes of the city of Dublin, for the purpose of ensuring that unanimity and co-opera-
 “ tion, which has been hitherto found so beneficial to the Catholics' interest.

“ *Resolved* unanimously, That the Right Honorable Henry Grattan be requested to present the
 “ petition

the nation. It has been a malevolent and most lamentable practice from that time to the present with certain persons, from whom truth was to be expected, to consider the subjects of Catholic emancipation and the reform of abuses in the Irish government, as game that might be hunted down with the most impudent and wicked falsehoods :* and as the conduct and character

“ petition of the Catholics of Dublin to the House of Commons on the approaching meeting of
“ parliament.

“ *Resolved* unanimously, That the above committee do prepare an address of congratulation, to
“ be presented to his excellency Earl Fitzwilliam, on his arrival in this kingdom. And the gen-
“ tlemen having prepared an address, and reported accordingly, it was

“ *Resolved* unanimously, That said address do stand as the address of the Catholics of the city of
“ Dublin, and be presented accordingly on his excellency's arrival.

“ *Resolved* unanimously, That the thanks of this meeting be presented to Edward Byrne, Esq.
“ for the zeal, spirit, and activity, which on this, as on all former occasions, he has manifested in
“ the cause of the Catholics of Ireland.

“ Signed, by order of the meeting,

“ RICHARD M'CORMICK, Sec.”

* We read in Lord Clare's speech on the Union (p. 65) “ That the concessions made to the Ca-
“ tholic demands in 1793, were then for the first time supported by the Whigs of 1789: but in the
“ course of debate nothing more than obscure hints and oracular ambiguity was thrown out on
“ the subject of unqualified emancipation, and the Catholic body remained quiet and contented
“ with the favors conferred upon them. If they looked to further indulgence, they were satisfied
“ to try the effects of time, temper, and negociation, and would have continued contented and
“ quiet, if they had not been brought forward as an engine of faction on a change of the Irish go-
“ vernment in 1795.” One is astonished at this barefaced string of falsities. It was matter of
the utmost notoriety, that Mr. Grattan and the Whig party supported the bills that were brought
forward in favor of the Catholics in 1782 and 1792: and Mr. Grattan (answer to Lord Clare, p. 24)
says, “ In the session of 1794, the Catholic subject was not mentioned, but in summer, on a
“ change being made in the British cabinet, being informed by some of the learned persons therein,
“ that the administration of the Irish department was to belong to them, and that they sent for us
“ to adopt our measures, I stated the Catholic emancipation to be one of them.” In 1793, so far
were they from *only throwing out obscure hints and oracular ambiguity in debate*, that on the 22d
of February, as has been before observed, when the order of the day for the second reading of the
Catholic bill was called, Mr. George Knox, after a very long speech in favor of a measure, not
merely to gratify, but to satisfy the Catholics in the fullest extent by removing all disabilities, moved,
that Roman Catholics should be permitted to hold seats in parliament. On the same day Major
Doyle said, he was the first person in that house, who declared his determination to give entire and
total emancipation to the Roman Catholics of Ireland. Mr. Grattan on the same day said, “ I could
“ with the bill under your consideration had gone further. I could have wished, that it had given
“ the

rafter of that respectable nobleman who fucceeded Lord Westmorland in the Irish government became implicated with both thofe fubjects, he was alfo expofed to the aim of every one, who did not difdain the ufe of thofe difgraceful weapons. This period of Irish hiftory is perhaps fraught with more important confequences to that kingdom, than any which has exifted fince the days of Henry II. The truth therefore of the facts, whatever effects may have enfued from them, it is fupereminently neceffary to eftablifh.

The meafure of emancipation to the Catholics, was, faid Lord Fitzwilliam, originally the meafure of Mr. Pitt and the Westmorland adminiftration. His moft strenuous and jealous friends claimed the credit of it for their patron in terms of the higheft compliment. They had done it in the Houfe of Commons; they had done it on the preceding day in the Houfe of Lords. The declarations both of Mr. Pitt and Mr. Dundas (now Lord Melville) on the occafion were well known in Ireland and often quoted. “ *They would not risk a rebellion in Ireland on fuch a queftion.*” That the principle of the meafure had been admitted by the British cabinet is felf evident: as the whole queftion of the unfortunate difference between them and the lord lieutenant arofe only upon the time of carrying it into effect, as will be prefently noticed. That Lord Fitzwilliam went over with a plenitude of power from the British cabinet to carry every meafure, which he propofed, amongft which was that of Catholic emancipation, ftands roundly afferted by that nobleman himfelf, and by Lord Milton, and by Mr. Ponfonby, and Mr. Grattan, who were fent for to England and confulted upon the fubject. It was contradicted by Lord Westmoreland,* who faid in the British Houfe of Peers, that Mr. Pitt, had affured him, “ that Earl Fitzwilliam had no authority whatever from mi-

“ the Roman Catholics the privilege of other difsenters. I am fure that is the only found policy. “ Come then, and by one great act cancel this code.” (Vide Par. Deb. of this date.) As for the Catholic body, Lord Kenmare, and other gentlemen of that body, affured Lord Fitzwilliam, that he and every perfon of his defcription were in perfect unifon with the committee. The Catholics of the city of Dublin in November, 1792, ftated in their declaration, that they never fhould forego the hopes of emancipation. Hundreds of refolutions paffed at parochial and other larger meetings of Roman Catholics after the paffing of the convention bill publicly falify that lord’s affertion, that they were contented with the favors conferred upon them: and that they were not brought forward as an engine of faction. They certainly came forward upon their own fenfe, feeling, and principle: not infligated by Mr. Grattan or any one, who it was expected would be minifter to Lord Fitzwilliam, though in full confidence, that no minifters of that viceroy, would refift the peaceable cry of three millions to be releafed from their remaining shackles.

* 41 Par. Deb. p. 352.

“ nifters

“ ministers in this country for taking the steps, which he had done on the Catholic question: nay that they were steps taken not only without their authority, but with their positive disapprobation.” Official secrecy was the reason alleged by all the servants of the crown for not giving the direct negative to the noble Earl’s assertions both in the British and Irish parliament. Lord Fitzwilliam was severely censured by many both in and out of parliament for a breach of official confidence.* The late Lord Clare has also ventured to assert, “ that † it is now ascertained, that he came to Ireland with full instructions not to encourage the agitation of any further claims, on the part of the Irish Catholics: perhaps he might be justified in stating, that his instructions were to keep it back. But his name and authority were abused to force the Catholic body to come forward as the engine of political intrigue, and in contradiction of their recent declaration by the organ of their general committee in 1792, to demand the repeal of every law, by which they were excluded from political power. Lord Fitzwilliam took possession of his government on the 4th of January, 1795.” How great soever the authority of the Earl of Clare may have been, historical justice demands, that the untruth of his representations of the efforts to procure Catholic emancipation should be noticed. Because the names of three persons, who afterwards were implicated in rebellion appear upon the address, which was presented by the Catholics to Lord Fitzwilliam, his lordship most unaccountably criminales the whole body, by asserting against the fact, “ that it was originally a pretence for rebellion; and was then (viz. in 1800) a powerful engine of faction wielded in both countries against the peace and happiness of Ireland. An engine, which had already shaken the government to its foundation, and could not fail to level it with the dust, if they were to continue in a state of separation from the British nation.”

No sooner had the new viceroy landed, than he immediately set about the work he had been especially ‡ deputed to take in hand.

As

* It was observed by Mr. Jekill, in the House of Commons, that Lord Westmorland’s declarations dissolved all the regard, that had been so affectedly attached to the oath of secrecy of cabinet ministers. We must therefore rather lay discredit to the account of a displaced courtier, than perjury at the door of the premier.

† Speech on union, p. 66.

‡ Having no document so authentic as the public averment of a most respectable nobleman, who was the actor in the important scenes under a special commission and instructions, which are at every

As the parliament stood prorogued to the 22d day of January, his excellency began his government by some dismissals, which created surprize and
general

every hour open to publication to refute any misstatements, the annalist cannot dispense with submitting to the reader the genuine account of the opening of this extraordinary mission : (2 letter to Lord Carlisle) “ From the very beginning, as well as through the whole progress of that fatal business, for fatal I fear, I must call it, I acted in perfect conformity with the original outline settled between me and his majesty’s ministry, previous to my departure from London. From a full consideration of the real merits of the case, as well as from every information I had been able to collect of the state and temper of Ireland, from the year 1790, I was decidedly of opinion, that not only sound policy, but justice, required, on the part of Great Britain, that the work, which was left imperfect at that period, ought to be completed, and the Catholics relieved from every remaining disqualification. In this opinion the Duke of Portland uniformly concurred with me, and when this question came under discussion, previous to my departure for Ireland, I found the cabinet, with Mr. Pitt at their head, strongly impressed with the same conviction. Had I found it otherwise, I never would have undertaken the government. I at first proposed, that the additional indulgences should be offered from the throne ; the very best effects would be secured by this act of unsolicited graciousness ; and the embarrassing consequences which was natural to foresee must result from the measures being left open for any volunteer to bring forward, would be timely and happily avoided. But to this proposal objections were started, that appeared of sufficient weight to induce the adoption of another plan. I consented not to bring the question forward on the part of government, but rather to endeavour to keep it back, until a period of more general tranquillity, when so many material objects might not press upon the government, but as the principle was agreed on, and the necessity of its being brought into full effect was universally allowed, it was at the same time resolved, that if the Catholics should appear determined to stir the business, and bring it before parliament, I was to give it a handsome support on the part of government.

“ I was no sooner landed, and informed of the real state of things here, than I found that question would force itself upon my immediate consideration. Faithful to the system that had been agreed on, and anxious to attain the object that had been committed to my discretion, I lost not a moment in gaining every necessary information, or in transmitting the result to the British cabinet. As early as the 8th of January, I wrote to the secretary of state on the subject ; I told him, that I trembled about the Roman Catholics ; that I had great fears about keeping them quiet for the session ; that I found the question already in agitation ; that a committee was appointed to bring forward a petition to parliament, praying for a repeal of all remaining disqualifications. I mentioned my intentions of immediately using what efforts I could to stop the progress of it, and to bring the Catholics back to a confidence in government. I stated the substance of some conversations I had on the subject with some of the principal persons of the country. It was the opinion of one of these, that if the postponing of the question could be negotiated on grounds of expediency, it ought not to be resisted by government. That it should be put off for some time, was allowed by another to be a desirable thing, but the principle of extension was at

general apprehensions through all the official departments of the castle. They were represented to the British cabinet with every degree of exaggerated cruelty: and artful pains were taken to circulate the reports of them through the nation injurious to the lord lieutenant. He began by removing two clerks from office placed in a situation of confidence, but perfectly subordinate and of no ostensibility: neither his excellency nor his chief secretary, with whom they were in hourly intercourse, felt inclined to repose confidence in them.* He made proposals to the British ministers for the removal of the attorney and solicitor general: it having been previously arranged with Mr. Pitt and the Duke of Portland, that those two gentlemen were not to possess his confidence in the arduous measures he had to undertake. Whatever might be their professional merits, neither of them possessed those parliamentary abilities, which his excellency required, and which were found in so eminent a degree in their intended successors, Messrs. Ponsonby and Curran. The

“ the same time strongly insisted on, and forcibly inculcated, as a matter not only wise, but necessary to the public tranquillity.

“ From the day of the date of this letter, I unremittingly applied myself to the collecting of further information. I received an address; in my answer, which I transmitted, I endeavoured to keep clear of all specific engagements whatever, though at the same time I had avoided every thing that could be construed into a rejection of what they were all looking to—the repeal of the remaining restrictions; and (what comes immediately to the point) I concluded by declaring, that I should not do my duty, if I did not distinctly relate it as my opinion, that not to grant cheerfully, on the part of government, all the Catholics wished for, would not only be exceedingly impolitic, but perhaps dangerous, that in doing this, no time was to be lost; that the business would be presently at hand; and that the first step I took would be of infinite importance; that if I received no very peremptory directions to the contrary, I should acquiesce,—I meant, in the time, in the mode of proceeding, and in the extent of the demands. For as to the measure, considered generally, I could conceive no necessity to wait for any new directions, on which to decide. Of this I reminded the secretary of state. ‘Convinced’ I said ‘as we all are, of the necessity, as well as fitness, of the measure taking place, at no distant period, I was decidedly of opinion, that any attempt to defer it, would be useless, if not dangerous.’ “The state of the country required this, and the position of the Catholics, among whom ‘the appearance of hesitation on the part of government, might produce mischief to a degree beyond calculation.’ “You will not forget, that all this passed within the first fortnight after my arrival, and before the meeting of parliament.”

* One of these was Mr. Cooke, of whom Lord Fitzwilliam thus writes to Lord Carlisle, “Mr. Cooke indeed, whose tone and style rendered his approach to a superior not to be supported, rejects my proposals in his favor, and thinks a retreat upon 1200*l.* a year an inadequate recompence for the magnitude and importance of his services.”

attorney

attorney general was to have retired on a reversion of 2,300*l.* (and that daily augmenting) to himself and son, a peerage for his family, and a promise of the first vacancy of a chief seat on the bench: and it was his excellency's intentions to have done equally well by the solicitor general. But the greatest fore was the removal of Mr. Beresford, of which that nobleman's own account must prove more satisfactory and authentic than any other.

“*And now for the grand question about Mr. Beresford. In a letter of mine to Mr. Pitt on this subject, I reminded him of a conversation, in which I had expressed to him (in answer to the question put to him by me) my apprehensions, that it would be necessary to remove that gentleman, and that he did not offer the slightest objection, or say a single word in favor of Mr. Beresford. This alone would have made me suppose, that I should be exempt from every imputation of breach of agreement, if I determined to remove him; but when, on my arrival here, I found all those apprehensions of his dangerous power, which Mr. Pitt admits I had often represented to him, were fully justified; when he was filling a situation greater than that of the lord lieutenant; and when I clearly saw, that if I had connected myself with him, it would have been connecting myself with a person under universal heavy suspicions, and subjecting my government to all the opprobrium and unpopularity attendant upon his mal-administration. What was then to be my choice, what the decision I had to form? I could not hesitate a moment. I decided at once, not to cloud the dawn of my administration, by leaving in such power and authority, so much imputed malversation: but in doing this, I determined, while I meant to curtail him of his power, and to shew to the nation, that he did not belong to my administration, to let him remain in point of income, as well, to the full, as he had ever been: I did not touch, and he knew I had determined not to touch, a hair of the head of any of his family or friends; and they are still left in the full enjoyment of more emolument, than ever was accumulated in any country upon any one family. To the odium of doing so I submitted, rather than incur the risque of displeasing my colleagues, by infringing the emolument of a person professing great attachment to them; though indeed, at the same time, I had no flight ground of doubting the sincerity of those professions. This, then, is the list of my dismissals.”

Great preparations having been made during the Summer and Autumn of

* Letter to Lord Carlisle.

1794, by different bodies of Roman Catholics throughout the kingdom, to bring before parliament an efficient application for their total emancipation, their confidence of success first rose out of the introduction of the Duke of Portland with many of his friends into the British cabinet, upon the question of the war; which being foreign from any points of internal regulation in Ireland, they gave that whole party full credit for retaining all those principles so favorable to them and their friends, which had been manifested by his grace in the glorious year of 1782. For many weeks after that memorable coalition, the public belief was, that the government of the country would have been committed to his grace in person. Their ardor, however, was not at all abated upon the report, that the vice-regency was to be committed to Earl Fitzwilliam. In the beginning of September, the Northern Star, (the popular paper of Belfast) had announced the probability of this event, and that the first measure of his administration was to be the emancipation of the Roman Catholics. The inflexible integrity, honor and liberality of this nobleman had gained by anticipation the most unlimited credit from the bulk of the Irish nation, as his tender kindness and benevolence to a numerous and happy tenantry had long ensured him the love and affectionate esteem of all, who personally knew him. The steps which the different bodies of the Roman Catholics were pursuing under these confidential expectations were publicly known and alluded to in the different prints of the day, without any pretension to secrecy. It was justly observed by that nobleman, that *the jealousy and alarm, which at a certain period of Lord Westmorland's administration pervaded the minds of the Protestant body, then existed no longer; when not one Protestant corporation, scarcely an individual had come forward to deprecate and oppose the indulgence claimed by the higher orders of Catholics; when even some of those, who were then their most violent opposers declared the indulgences now asked, to be only the necessary consequences of those granted at that time, and positively to secure the well being of the two countries. The address of the Catholics of Dublin was presented to his excellency on the 7th of January, 1795:† and was followed

* 1 Letter to Lord C.

† One laments to see party bias work up a person in the exalted situation of a chancellor and minister, to give so distorted a representation of the loyal and dutiful act of a respectable body of subjects, evidently calculated to throw a suspicion of treason upon the whole body of those addressers. “ (*Lord Clare's speech*, p. 66.) An address to Lord Fitzwilliam in the name of their
“ body

followed up by similar addresses from different bodies; they were all of a similar tendency, and received from his excellency similar answers.* It was a fact publicly known to all and complained of by some, that large as the concessions had been to the Catholics in the preceding session, their gratitude for them appeared less prominent in their different resolutions and addresses, than their confidence and expectation of their future extension. It was observed,

“ body was voted, and at the front of the committee appointed to greet the king’s representative
 “ under the auspices of his self avowed minister, stand the names of Dr. William James M’Neven,
 “ Mr. John Sweetman, and Mr. Richard M’Cormick, all of them self-convicted traitors. Mr.
 “ M’Neven has very candidly acknowledged that Catholic emancipation was always a mere pre-
 “ tence, and that if he and the worthy gentlemen with whom he acted, had been enabled to succeed
 “ in their projects, they would as soon have established the Mahometan as the Popish religion.
 “ It was originally a pretence for rebellion, &c.”

* In order to shew how little treasonable these addresses were in their origin, tendency, or expressions, I have selected one, by way of sample, presented to his excellency by Lord Kenmare and the titular bishop, from the Roman Catholics of the county of Kerry.

“ *To his Excellency, &c.*

“ MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,

“ WE, his majesty’s most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Catholics of the
 “ county of Kerry, beg leave to approach your excellency on your appointment to the government
 “ of this kingdom.

“ Proud of living under a monarch, whose glory it is to cultivate the affections of his subjects,
 “ as the firmest support of his throne, we receive with the most lively gratitude as a fresh instance
 “ of his parental regards for the interest of this country, his deputing a nobleman to the important
 “ station of chief governor, from whose elated virtues we have every thing to hope, and whose
 “ gracious reply to our brethren of Dublin, is a sure earnest of the wisdom of his councils.

“ Under his majesty’s auspicious reign, the Catholics of this kingdom have gradually emerged
 “ from a depressed condition to the participation of valuable privileges; when penalties were an-
 “ nexed to the exercise of our religion, we found an asylum in his majesty’s lenity, and in the
 “ recent concessions of a liberal and enlightened parliament, was recognized the influence of his
 “ majesty’s example.

“ Highly sensible of these favors from which we and our country have derived so many advan-
 “ tages, we trust our conduct will, on every occasion, merit your excellency’s favorable represen-
 “ tation of our grateful attachment to our most gracious sovereign, his august house, and our inva-
 “ luable constitution.

“ When it shall seem good to the legislature to remove the disabilities, which still affect our body,
 “ we presume to assure your excellency, that we shall rejoice more as Irishmen than as Catholics,
 “ and we humbly beg leave to express our confidence, that it will be the glory of your excellency’s
 “ administration to cement unanimity amongst the people committed to your care, and thus esta-
 “ blish an inseparable barrier against the enemies of his majesty’s person and government.”

that

that the firmly cherished hope of a total deliverance from all disqualifications was so predominant among them, that the former grants had met with a cold reception.

On the 22d of January, 1795, Earl Fitzwilliam met the parliament, and in his speech* alluded to the eventful situation of the British empire, and called

* Although the viceregency of Earl Fitzwilliam were the shortest of any during the last century, yet it was pregnant with the most eventful consequences : we give therefore an exact copy of his speech.

“ MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

“ IN obedience to his majesty’s commands, I resort to your councils, at a period which, in a peculiar manner, calls for the wisdom and energy of parliament.

“ His majesty’s determination is fixed. As long as he is supported by his faithful subjects, he never will be wanting to them or to himself. His majesty has no interest but that of his people, no views but for their happiness, no object but their general safety.

“ The uniform tenor of your conduct has demonstrated, that you will not only be desirous, but zealous, to second and emulate the magnanimity of a sovereign formed to lead a nation, that has ever been as firm to assert its liberties, as affectionately devoted to a government, which maintains its own authority for the sole purpose of supporting those liberties.

“ As you are thus cordially attached to that sovereign, and to the constitution, which it is his glory to protect, I have to announce to you, with true satisfaction, what you will hear, with equal pleasure, the intended marriage of his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, with the Princess Carolina Amelia Elizabeth, daughter of his most illustrious highness the Duke of Brunswick and Lunenburgh, a princess of that illustrious house, to whose mild and constitutional sway these kingdoms are highly indebted for the blessings they enjoy ; this marriage promises the perpetuation of the same blessings under the same house.

“ I have it also in command to inform you, that his majesty has concluded a treaty of amity, commerce and navigation with the United States of America, in which it has been majesty’s object to remove as far as possible, all grounds of jealousy and misunderstanding, and to improve an intercourse beneficial to both states. As soon as the ratification of this treaty shall have been exchanged, and I shall have received a copy of it, I will direct it to be laid before you, in order that you may consider, whether it will be necessary that you should make any provisions for carrying into effect a treaty, in which the commerce of this kingdom is so materially and extensively interested.

“ GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS,

“ I have directed the estimates of the public service, and the state of the public accounts, to be laid before you.

“ His majesty has that assured confidence grounded on a long and uniform experience of your loyalty and your zeal for his service, and the good of your country, that I think it unnecessary to press you in any particular manner to make a provision adequate to the present awful situation of affairs.

“ It

called upon them to lend their aid to its support in those extraordinary circumstances. Immediately after the speech had been read, Mr. Grattan (whom

“ It is with pleasure I acquaint you, that this provision will in some degree be facilitated by the
 “ circumstance, that, during the existence of such a war as the present, the public revenue, together with the commerce of the kingdom, has kept up, and has even been augmented: advantages, which are due to the care and vigilance of our sovereign, in the general protection provided by him for his subjects.

“ MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

“ I earnestly recommend to you a continuance of the laudable pains you have constantly taken to cultivate all your domestic advantages in commerce, in manufactures, and in such public works as have appeared directed to promote those important objects. These are the true foundations of all public revenue and public strength. Your endeavours have had their fruit.

“ The great staple manufacture of this kingdom has increased beyond the most sanguine expectations; an advantage principally owing to the constant superintendance and wise provisions of the parliament of Ireland, and next to those, to the assured liberal and most merited encouragement, which it receives in the rich and extensive market of Great Britain; a circumstance tending to cement the union and to perfect the harmony which happily subsists, and I trust will subsist for ever, between the two kingdoms.

“ Attached as you are to the general cause of religion, learning and civilization, I have to recommend to your consideration, the state of education in this kingdom, which in some parts will admit of improvement, in others may require some new arrangements; considerable advantages have been already derived under the wise regulations of parliament from the Protestant charter schools, and these will as usual claim your attention; but as these advantages have been but partial, and as circumstances have made other considerations connected with this important subject highly necessary, it is hoped, that your wisdom will order every thing relating to it in the manner most beneficial, and the best adapted to the occasions of the several descriptions of men, which compose his majesty's faithful subjects in Ireland.

“ We are engaged in an arduous contest; the time calls not only for great fortitude and an unusual share of public spirit, but for much constancy and perseverance. You are engaged with a power, which, under the ancient forms of its internal arrangement, was always highly formidable to the neighbouring nations. Lately this power has assumed a new shape, but with the same ambition, with much more extensive and systematic designs, far more effective, and without comparison more dreadful in the certain consequences of its eventual success; it threatens nothing less than the entire subversion of the liberty and independence of every state in Europe: an enemy to them all, it is actuated with a peculiar animosity against these kingdoms, not only as the natural protection of the balance of power in Europe, but also because, by the possession of a legal, humane, and rational freedom, we seem to reproach that false and spurious liberty, which in reality is an ignominious servitude, tending to extinguish all good arts, to generate nothing but impiety, crime, disorder, and ferocious manners, and to end in wretchedness and general desolation.

“ To

(whom not having received any place, Lord Clare called, the self-avowed Minister of Lord Fitzwilliam) rose to move the address. "The speech from the throne," said he, "goes to three great objects: the preservation of Europe, the harmony of the present generation, and the education of the future. We cannot debate the causes of the war; we deliberate the present state of it; Europe's danger, and our own. When France covered more ground in Europe, and when France took Brabant, conquered Flanders, invaded Holland, she made war on Ireland. You know enough of the levels of Europe to foresee that that great ocean, that inundation of barbarity, that desolation of infidelity, that dissolution of government, and that sea of arms, if it swell over the continent, must visit our coasts. Do not depreciate so much your danger or pre-eminence, as to imagine you are no more concerned in the evils of the times, than to read the Gazette, which relates them; nor forget that you have raised your head too high on the globe, not to encounter the storm. If the continent of Europe belong to France, if all the coast from Holland to Brest belonged to France, this island must sink to the bottom of the ocean. You cannot divide the western empire; the continent to the French, and Ireland to herself; this is not like your other wars, this is not like the American war; in that war, the object was, tax the last colony; but no matter, many of the best friends of this country opposed that war; but when the French interposed, when the ancient enemy of these realms, the eternal rival in all shapes, monarchical or republican, of Great Britain, the same men took a decided part against France; for it has been the long habit of this country, to con-

"To guard his people from the enterprises of this dangerous and malignant power, and for the protection of all civilized society against the inroads of anarchy, his majesty has availed himself of every rational aid, foreign and domestic; he has called upon the skill, courage, and experience of all his subjects, wheresoever dispersed. And you must be duly sensible, in such a crisis as the present, which rarely occurs in the course of human affairs, of the advantage of thus endeavouring to profit of the united strength and zeal of every description of his subjects.

"I have to assure you of his majesty's most cheerful concurrence in every measure which your wisdom and comprehensive patriotism shall point out for this salutary purpose.

"On my part you shall find me, from principle, and from inclination, thoroughly disposed to concur with his majesty's paternal wishes, and with the wise measures of his parliament. On a cordial affection to the whole of Ireland; and on a conduct suitable to that sentiment, I wish to found my own personal estimation and my reputation in the execution of the great trust committed by the most beneficent of sovereigns to my care."

"fider

“ sider her in every new shape as the old enemy ; nor is this like the seven
 “ years war; there the object was, a distant territory in another hemisphere, and
 “ with which you are not to trade; yet then you took the field, voted armies,
 “ and incurred a debt, wisely if you mean to go on with England, idly if
 “ you go back now: nor is this like the Spanish convention of 1790, and
 “ yet on the foud of that war you voted a loan.

“ Nootka Sound, a strip of land, a barren island, a remote and uncultivated tract; the speculation of the produce of a waste or the vision of a punctilio of honor, do not now, as once, kindle Europe to arms; it is Europe herself, and her islands that are at stake; princes, potentates, her orders and degrees, the creature and the Creator, man and the Godhead. It follows from this, that the present object of the war is not, because it cannot be, to interfere with the internal government of France, but rather prevent her interference with every realm and government, systematic or actual, by arms, by intrigues, or by money. Little does the present state of the war attack the liberty of France: I wish she had liberty: I wish there was any thing in her internal situation that promised liberty to herself or security to Europe.

“ No nation understands liberty, perhaps, better than you do. Did you in your struggles ever imagine such a species of liberty? Her liberty is death, and her state Bedlam; where the sceptre is broken into ten thousand scorpions in the hands of ten thousand maniacs, scourging one another for offences that are only exceeded by the barbarity, with which they are punished: however, that is not now the question, nor is the question on the causes of the war, but the actual state of it---the danger of Europe, the danger of Ireland; and as formerly you struggled for the British constitution, in opposition to the claim of the British parliament, so now you contend, in conjunction with Great Britain, for that constitution against France, and for that constitution with every thing beside included, you fight for your island. To be weak at any time, is to be miserable; but to be weak at this time, is to be nothing. You gave to the cause your troops, but you must give your heart along with them, and promote the courage of your troops by the gallant sympathy of your councils. By opposing France, you have made a determined enemy; by leaving England, you would secure a suspicious friend: pushed as she now is for her trident, she will never forget your cordiality, or forgive your coldness. On the

“ supposition of your coldness, she will say, that in her days of triumph you
 “ talked plausibly to her; and she will as plausibly leave you, accordingly,
 “ to all the evils that are common to the empire, without the participation
 “ of its pride or its prosperity, she will leave you to a species of government
 “ and connection supported by job; when a few, affecting to monopolize the
 “ loyalty of the country, would monopolize the powers of government, and
 “ would rule you with a rod of iron; but on the supposition of your cor-
 “ diality---on the supposition that the nation puts her own image on her own
 “ loyalty, and takes a leading part in cultivating British connection against
 “ French designs---then Britain must regard your people as an invaluable
 “ ally, and their free constitution as an active and vital principle of her em-
 “ pire. This cordiality is your dower---not liberty: for that you would sur-
 “ render; nor money, for that you do not in any considerable amount pos-
 “ sess; not your men, numerous and brave as they have flocked to your
 “ standard: no, it is your disposition. What is that disposition? An absolute,
 “ unqualified anti-gallicism of sentiment! Your hands are valuable, but
 “ that is inestimable, and in that sentiment those hard hands bring a better
 “ dower than the riches of the East---No heiress Ireland, but an unadorned
 “ bride! And yet, in that one marriageable sentiment, she will prove to the
 “ empire the fruitful mother of invaluable blessings; the garden of the em-
 “ pire is before her---but touch not the plant of Gallic growth, its fruit is
 “ death, though it be not the tree of knowledge.

“ Accordingly you perceive his majesty thanks you for your extraordinary
 “ efforts, for those exertions of generosity and courage, which animated the
 “ allegiance, and now constitute the character of your country: but above
 “ all, he thanks you for that inestimable disposition to exercise those free and
 “ independent constitutional powers so illustriously obtained, in support of
 “ the throne; in cultivating the connection, and in maintaining the high
 “ station you now possess in Europe, in opposition to the natural enemy of
 “ these kingdoms, and to principles incompatible with any form or system of
 “ liberty or government; but to be attached to one another, external energy
 “ must arise from internal union, and without that, your attachment to Eng-
 “ land, and your allegiance to the king, though extremely honorable, would
 “ be entirely useless.

“ His majesty, therefore, in the second part of his speech, recommends na-
 “ tional harmony; he bids perpetual peace to all your animosities; he touches
 “ with

“ with the sceptre those troubled waters, which have long flattered the
 “ weary bark of your country, under her various and false pilots, for ages of
 “ insane persecution and impious theology: it is a pious and profound re-
 “ commendation, which enlightened the speech of 1793, when the olive
 “ descended from the throne: on the experiment of that advice, he con-
 “ gratulated the liberality of parliament---he spreads his parental wings over
 “ all his children---discerning with parental affection and a father’s eye, in the
 “ variety of their features, the fidelity of their resemblance.

“ The union of all the property of the country in support of the laws, and
 “ all the talents in support of the property, with measures to redress and to
 “ unite, accompanied with a graciousness of manner to the subject, that he
 “ may feel not only a privilege under the government, but a pride in the
 “ condition of being a subject; another pledge of his allegiance, is an ex-
 “ periment worthy of a wise government, whose primary object is your prof-
 “ perity, and whose secondary object is your love; a government, looking
 “ in its arrangement of measures for the constitution, a solid strength, and for
 “ itself an honest power, to administer the country according to its confi-
 “ dence in pursuit of its advantages, with a spirit too high for resentment,
 “ and alike superior to plunder or proscription.

“ From the union of the present generation, the public care of the speech
 “ proceeds to the education of the rising generation.

“ On this subject it is intended, that a plan should be submitted for col-
 “ leges for the education of Catholic clergy, who are now excluded from the
 “ continent; and also two or more colleges, where the children of the Pro-
 “ testant clergy shall be in a great proportion on the foundation, and where
 “ the patronage of the minister will be less considered than that of the Uni-
 “ versity.

“ Of the disturbances in Meath and the borders, the speech is silent; wisely,
 “ lest it should magnify a banditti into a rebellion, implicate the lower or-
 “ ders in the crime of a gang of robbers, and bespeak on the part of his ma-
 “ jesty, any thing less than a complete satisfaction in the loyalty of all his
 “ people.

“ But though the mischief has not been stated, the thing has not been
 “ neglected; on the contrary, means have been taken already, and further
 “ means will be resorted to: and if the laws, when put in full execution, are
 “ not sufficient, parliament will be resorted to for power to extinguish a ban-

“ ditti, which cannot be tolerated by any government, and must now prepare
 “ to forfeit either their lives or their practices.

“ There is a part of the speech, on which on subject and no Irishman can
 “ speak without emotions of joy and affection---the marriage of his Royal
 “ Highness the Prince of Wales, an event the most auspicious; whether we
 “ consider the mild government of his family, the blessings this country has
 “ derived under his father, or the qualities of the august personage himself,
 “ a blessing to these countries; but I should think him doubly a blessing, if
 “ he shall communicate to posterity the graciousness of his manners, or the
 “ perfections of his mind.”

This speech of Mr. Grattan's explicitly pledged the principles of the new lieutenant's government to the Irish nation; and it becomes essentially necessary to weigh them maturely, in order to bring within their bearing the particular measures, which were afterwards brought forward by his excellency. Mr. Duquerry was the only person in the house who did not consent to waive the original cause of the war, which he reprobated with pointed severity: to him Mr. George Ponsonby very fully replied; and the motion for the address was carried without a division: as was also the motion of Mr. Conolly for an address* to the lord lieutenant: and a committee was appointed to prepare them.

In

* The unanimous sentiments of the House of Commons towards Earl Fitzwilliam, who was soon recalled, and whose recall produced such a change of measures in government and disposition in the people as will be hereafter noticed, are given for the satisfaction of the reader.

“ To His Excellency WILLIAM, Earl FITZWILLIAM, Lord Lieutenant General and General
 “ Governor of Ireland.

“ The humble Address of the Knights, Citizens, and Burgeſſes, in Parliament aſſembled.

“ MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,

“ WE, his majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the commons of Ireland,
 “ in parliament assembled, beg leave to return your excellency our sincere thanks for your most
 “ excellent speech from the throne. We assure your excellency, that we consider his majesty's ap-
 “ pointment of your excellency to be our chief governor, as a signal instance of his majesty's atten-
 “ tion to the interests, and condescension to the wishes of his people of Ireland; that we are con-
 “ vinced, that in your excellency we shall always find a ready concurrence with his majesty's pa-
 “ ternal wishes, and with the wise measures of his parliament, for the happiness of his subjects.
 “ That on a cordial affection to the whole of Ireland, and on a conduct suitable to that sentiment,
 “ your excellency wishes to found your own personal estimation and your reputation, in the execu-
 “ tion of the great trust committed by the most beneficent sovereign to your care. On our part,
 “ your

In the mean time the Catholics, buoyed up with the firmest confidence of success, were preparing to back their intended application to parliament with

“ your excellency may depend upon a firm and affectionate support, prompted by inclination as much as by duty. We shall second, with peculiar pleasure, the measures of a chief governor, no less remarkable for his unshaken loyalty to his sovereign than for his invincible attachment to the rights and liberties of the people, and whose possessions in this country, however ample, afford a pledge much less valuable than his character for his attention to its interests.

“ We return your excellency our sincere acknowledgments for the kind opinion you have expressed of our conduct; and we assure your excellency, we shall not only be desirous, but zealous to emulate the magnanimity of a sovereign, formed to lead a nation that has ever been as firm to assert its liberties, as affectionately devoted to a government which maintains its own authority for the sole purpose of supporting those liberties.

“ Cordially attached as we are to that sovereign, and to that constitution which it is his glory to protect, we warmly participate in the joy your excellency feels in communicating to us the marriage of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales with the Princess Carolina Amelia Elizabeth, daughter of His Most Illustrious Highness the Duke of Brunswick and Lunenburg; a princess of that illustrious house to whose mild and constitutional sway these kingdoms are highly indebted for the blessings they enjoy; and which we trust will, by this marriage, be perpetuated under the same house.

“ The communication which your excellency has made to us by his majesty's commands, of his majesty's having concluded a treaty of amity, commerce, and navigation with the United States of America, we receive with the highest pleasure; and we entertain a perfect conviction, that it has been his majesty's object to remove, as far as possible, all grounds of jealousy and misunderstanding, and to improve an intercourse beneficial to both states; and your excellency may be assured, that so soon as your excellency shall direct a copy of it to be laid before us, we will consider what provisions may on our part be necessary for carrying into effect a treaty in which the commerce of this kingdom is so materially and extensively interested.

“ We learn from your excellency with the truest satisfaction the confidence of our gracious sovereign in our loyalty and zeal for his service and the good of our country; and we assure your excellency, that we shall not delay to make a provision for the public exigencies, adequate to the present awful situation of affairs. It is a great consolation to us to learn from your excellency, that the revenue and commerce of the kingdom have not only kept up, but even augmented, notwithstanding the war in which we are engaged; advantages which, under the Divine Providence, we thankfully acknowledge to be due to the care and vigilance of our sovereign, in the general protection provided by him for all his subjects.

“ We are sensible of your excellency's wisdom in recommending to us to cultivate all our domestic advantages in commerce, in manufactures, and such public works as have appeared directed to promote these important objects, which your excellency justly considers as the true foundation of public revenue and of public strength; and we assure your excellency, that while we reflect with peculiar satisfaction on the success of our efforts for the prosperity of the linen manufacture, we do also gratefully acknowledge, that its rapid and unexampled increase has been

“ materially

with all the weight, that time and circumstances could produce in their favor. Their sanguine unanimity was too formidable to be damped or disappointed, and

“ materially promoted by the liberal encouragement it receives in the rich and extensive market of Great Britain, a circumstance tending to cement the union, and perfect the harmony which subsists, and we trust will ever subsist, between the two kingdoms.

“ Attached as we are to the general cause of religion, learning, and civilization, we feel ourselves bound to return your excellency our warmest thanks, for recommending to our care the state of education in this kingdom; we feel that considerable advantages have been already derived from the Protestant charter-schools, which shall as usual receive our attention; but as these advantages have been but partial, and as circumstances have made other considerations connected with this important subject highly necessary, your excellency may be assured, that we shall endeavour to order every thing relating to it in the manner which shall, upon the most mature deliberation, seem most beneficial and the best adapted to the occasions of the several descriptions of men which compose his majesty's faithful subjects of Ireland.

“ Engaged in a contest which calls not only for great fortitude and an unusual share of public spirit, but for much constancy and perseverance, to oppose the arms and machinations of a power which, under the antient forms of its internal government, was always highly formidable to the neighbouring nations, but which at present, in a new shape, but with the same ambition, with more extensive and systematic designs, and with means far more effective, threatens nothing less than the entire subversion of the liberty and independence of every state in Europe, we thank your excellency for communicating to us his majesty's gracious intention of calling upon the skill, courage and experience of all his subjects, wherever dispersed, and of availing himself of the united strength and zeal of all his people; and your excellency may rest assured of our cordial co-operation in all such measures as are calculated to carry into execution this wise and salutary purpose.

“ We request your excellency to represent to his majesty our unshaken loyalty to his royal person, family, and government, and our fixed and unalterable determination to support to the utmost of our power our sister country against the rancorous animosity and dangerous rivalry of her antient enemy. Great Britain, assailed by France, may rely with confidence on the firm and affectionate support of Ireland; and we intreat your excellency to believe, that we esteem it a signal happiness to this nation to be governed, in such a crisis as the present, by a nobleman whose manners are formed to conciliate, and whose councils, we trust, will be directed to unite the whole body of his majesty's faithful subjects in the support of the honor of his crown, and the safety and prosperity of all his dominions.”

To this Address his Excellency was pleased to return the following answer :

“ THIS cordial address, justifying with such promptitude and alacrity the confidence which his majesty reposes in the spirit and loyalty of his faithful commons of Ireland, is of so salutary and animating a tendency, reflects such high honor on the national character, and gives so happy an earnest of the cheerfulness, vigor, and extent of the national exertion at this arduous and trying crisis, that it calls for more than ordinary expressions of satisfaction and acknowledgment.

“ Such

and Lord Fitzwilliam judged, that to defer the consideration of their demands could not be attempted without danger. Mr. Grattan possessed the unlimited confidence of the Catholics, and of the lord lieutenant.* On the 24th of January, Mr. Grattan presented a petition of the Catholics of the city of Dublin, whose names are thereunto subscribed, on behalf of themselves and others his majesty's Catholic subjects: that in pursuance of his majesty's most gracious and paternal recommendation of the situation of his Catholic subjects of that kingdom to the wisdom and liberality of his parlia-

“ Such sentiments, communicating themselves from one kingdom to the other ; such conformity
 “ in attachment to the constitution, and in affection for the best and most beloved of sovereigns, a
 “ spirit so firm and persevering in the support of a cause which they consider as common to both ;
 “ and a determination so fixed and unshaken, to stand or fall together, must be as encouraging to
 “ the friends as formidable to the enemies of the British name and empire. Standing on this
 “ ground, we have nothing to dread. The disturbers of the peace of Europe will see that, bound
 “ indissolubly together in interests, in principles, and in affection, Great Britain and Ireland disre-
 “ gard their menaces, and are determined, under Providence, to check the course of their extermi-
 “ nating ambition.

“ If any thing could be wanting to complete my satisfaction at this happy and auspicious com-
 “ mencement of my administration, I should find it in the flattering terms in which you express your
 “ approbation of my principles and past conduct, and in the generous confidence, with which you
 “ anticipate future benefits to be derived to this kingdom from my loyalty to my sovereign, and my
 “ inviolable attachment to the rights and liberties of the people.

“ The stake which I have in your country you naturally conclude ought to bind me in a peculiar
 “ manner to its interests ; but such considerations are languid and cold indeed, when compared
 “ with the ardent desire I feel to recommend myself in this new connexion which I have formed
 “ with you, to the approbation, the esteem, and the affection of the whole of Ireland.”

* Of this matter, Lord Fitzwilliam gave the following account :—“ When I had fully satisfied
 “ myself, by every information that I could gain, that this was the real state of the affair ; and
 “ when I found that any attempt of mine to stop it for the present would be useless, it gave me
 “ great satisfaction to find that the business had been put into the hands of my friend, Mr. Grattan,
 “ by the Catholics, as it gave me an opportunity of knowing every thing that was intended, and of
 “ consulting upon it with the cabinet in London, previous to its being publicly known. When
 “ once the Catholics had positively decided to bring forward this question, even if I had not had
 “ previous consultation with my colleagues on the business, under such circumstances I should
 “ have thought it right and expedient to gain credit and strength to the administration, by yielding
 “ to the general wish ; but the fact is, that while I was following my own opinions and inclina-
 “ tions, I was following their directions, and I strictly complied with them ; when finding that
 “ the general disposition was not to be resisted, I resolved to give the measure a handsome and
 “ cordial support on the part of government. The happy effects of this determination I fully expe-
 “ rienced.”

ment,

ment, which was, in the course of the session of 1793, pleased to remove many of the disabilities, pains and penalties under which the Catholics of Ireland had so long laboured, by a repeal of divers severe and oppressive laws peculiarly affecting that body; that, while the petitioners felt the deepest and most lively sense of the wisdom and goodness of parliament, manifested in the repeal of the said penal and restrictive statutes, they could not, in justice to themselves, refrain from most humbly submitting, that the Catholics of Ireland had been, and still were, in a number and variety of instances, prevented from enjoying the full benefits of the constitution of their country, by the existence of certain disabilities and restraints which the petitioners then did, with all humility and deference, presume to hope, on every principle, as well of expediency as of justice, it would no longer be thought necessary to retain; that the petitioners did most humbly presume to suggest to the wisdom of the house, that the most effectual mode to unite in sentiment all his majesty's subjects of Ireland in support of their most excellent constitution, agreeably to his gracious and paternal wish, would be to extend to them its blessings, by the abolition of those incapacities and disqualifications, of which the petitioners presumed most humbly to complain; and therefore praying the house to take the situation of the petitioners into consideration, their loyalty to their sovereign, their respect to the legislature, and dutiful and obedient submission to the laws, they would be pleased to restore them to a full enjoyment of the blessings of their most excellent constitution, by a repeal of all the penal and restrictive laws then affecting the Catholics of Ireland. The petition was ordered to lie on the table.

On the same day Mr. Vandeleur presented a petition much to the same effect, from the Catholics of the county of Clare: and soon after the table was laden with similar petitions from every distinct body of Catholics throughout the realm. Of the intermediate proceedings between the presentation of the first Catholic petition, and the motion for bringing in the Catholic bill, we have the following authentic account from the only source from which it could be procured.* On the 12th of February, 1794, Mr. Grattan moved for leave to bring in the bill, which was given with only the three dissentient voices of Dr. Duigenan, Mr. Ogle, and Colonel Blaquiére.† That nobleman observing, that it had been objected to him, that the bill had been brought in

* 15 Parl. Debates, p. 98.

† 1st letter to Lord Carlisle.

precipitately,

precipitately, assured his noble correspondent that that was not the fact. "Leave to bring in a bill has certainly been moved for by Mr. Grattan, but not a line of the bill itself ever produced. There appeared a rising impatience among the Catholics after the delivery of their petitions, which made me apprehend that the measure might be transferred from the hands of Mr. Grattan to those of another, with whom I might have no connexion, and consequently, over whom I could have no hopes of control, or to have communication, however much I might wish it. There was no want of candidates for this honor; there were enough greedy to seize upon it. I therefore desired Mr. Grattan to take possession of the business, that I might be sure of myself having control over the management of the bill. By this means, the plan and extent of the measure is now known only to the British cabinet, to whom I have submitted it, and it remains a profound secret to every Roman Catholic, and to every Protestant, except to the very few of the latter description, to whom I have thought proper to confide it. Of these the primate was the first; and ministers are already possessed of his opinions on the subject; they are equally in possession of every information respecting men's minds and tempers, which I am able to give: with respect to the merits of the case, abstracted from the local circumstances, surely it would be presumption in me to dictate to them: I have represented clearly and distinctly my own opinions, but they are capable of deciding and judging for themselves: in the way I have managed, they have an opportunity of doing it before the bill is introduced; so that if they do not agree with Mr. Grattan's, (in which I heartily concur), and if they do not come up to the extent claimed and expected by the Catholics, they have had time, previous to the introduction of the bill, to suggest any expedients, modifications, or limitations, they may think proper to introduce; thus, by my management, government will do this without incurring the odium of narrowing an original proposition, and defeating hopes once realized. Thus, then, I made myself master, as well of the time of bringing the measure forward, as for consulting on the points to be conceded; for, as to resisting altogether, I should have belied my own conviction, and betrayed my situation, if I did not represent, as I have repeatedly done, that it would not only defeat every hope I had formed for the general security and defence of the country, but be attended with a certainty of the most alarming and fatal consequences."

On the 14th of February, Lord Milton informed the house, that he was commanded by his excellency to communicate to them his majesty's gracious answer to their address. The only material paragraph of it noticed, that the favorable sentiments which they had expressed of the Earl Fitzwilliam, could not but be pleasing to his majesty, as they confirmed those impressions, which recommended him to his majesty's choice for the chief government of Ireland. This confirmation of the royal choice of the viceroy, was singularly received and commented upon in Dublin, having been communicated to the House of Commons on the very day which brought tidings that the British minister was adverse to the important measure, which the lord-lieutenant was thus publicly pursuing. The joy and exultation expressed by the Catholics on the occasion of leave for bringing in their bill, exceeded any similar instance in that country; but it was suddenly damped by this inexplicable intelligence, and their high mounted expectations fell into desponding gloom.

It has generally been the bane of Ireland, that its government has been seldom carried on upon those open principles of the constitution, which never fail to insure the happiness of the governed. Nothing could more emphatically demonstrate the apprehensions of Earl Fitzwilliam, that *Mr. Beresford was filling a situation greater than that of the lord-lieutenant*, than the issue of this contest for power. A regular correspondence was carried on, as was natural between the lord-lieutenant and the British cabinet upon the subject of the delicate, arduous, and important matters, which were to be carried on in Ireland. Not only had Earl Fitzwilliam been permitted to quit this country with a plenitude of power and discretion over the Catholic question, but he had acted for above a month upon it in Ireland without even an oblique reference to any difference of opinion in the British cabinet from him upon the subject of the Catholic question. The dismissal of Mr. Beresford had, indeed, been productive of very alarming effects in that quarter. It appears, however, from a letter of Mr. Wyndham's to Lord Milton, written on the 2d of February, that the Duke of Portland was at that time unacquainted with the alarm, which the intelligence of that transaction, conveyed indirectly to Mr. Pitt by Mr. Beresford himself, had occasioned. On the 9th of February, and not before, Mr. Pitt wrote to Earl Fitzwilliam to expostulate on the dismissal of Mr. Beresford: and also on the negotiation with Messrs. Wolfe and Toler: that formed the whole matter of his letter, and to that alone he
confined

confined his remonstrances: so far was he from finding any fault with the measures hitherto pursued, and which he well knew, that he concluded his letter by apologizing *for interrupting his attention from the many important considerations of a different nature, to which all their minds ought to be directed.* On the preceding day, the Duke of Portland, for the first time, in a letter to Earl Fitzwilliam, touched on the subject of Catholic emancipation, and then bringing it into play as a question of any doubt or difficulty in the British cabinet: and in that letter, as if it had never been the subject of any former consultation, plan, or arrangement whatever, he wrote of enabling the king's ministers to form their judgment as to the *policy, expediency, safety and necessity* of that measure. Then, as if he had never heard from his excellency upon the subject, he cautioned him against committing himself by engagements, or even by encouraging language, (so minute was his grace), to give any countenance to the immediate adoption of the measure. Then, for the first time, it appeared to have been discovered, that the deferring would not be an expediency, or a thing to be desired for the present, "but the means of doing a greater service to the British empire, than it had been capable of receiving since the revolution, or at least since the union." The Duke of Portland, in consequence of the discussion of the question in the cabinet on the 7th of February, then felt it his duty to exhort the lord lieutenant to use those efforts, which he had on the 8th of January expressed his intention of trying, though doubtful of success; but every hope of which, he had expressly assured his grace in a letter of the 15th of January, he had relinquished, when he warned them of the necessity of giving way, and earnestly called upon them for peremptory directions, which, if he should not receive, he would acquiesce. Efforts, which they knew, from the whole series of his correspondence, it was impossible even to attempt without evident and certain danger. Advanced as matters were in Ireland, it appears mysterious, that Mr. Pitt, had he been averse from that prominent measure of Catholic emancipation, should have written to Earl Fitzwilliam two days after the discussion of it in the cabinet without any allusion to it whatever, excepting such as rather imported his and his colleagues co-operation in the measure, than their reprobation of it.

On the 14th of February, that is, two days after Mr. Grattan had obtained leave to bring in the Catholic bill, Earl Fitzwilliam received Mr. Pitt's letter of the 9th, and the Duke of Portland's of the 8th, and on that same day his excel-

lency wrote answers to each of them. That to Mr. Pitt contained a full discussion and justification of his dismissals. But that to the Duke of Portland was calculated to bring the business to the real point at issue between them, and to leave him no subterfuge. It testified his excellency's surprize, that, after such an interval of time, and after the various details, transmitted to him, advising him of the hourly increasing necessity of bringing forward the Catholic question, and the impolicy and dangers of resisting, or even hesitating about it, he then should be pressed for the first time, to defer the question till some future occasion. He refused to be the person to run the risk of such a determination; he refused to be the person to raise a flame in the country, that nothing short of arms would be able to keep down. He then alluded to Mr. Pitt's letter; appealed to his knowledge of the situation of a lord lieutenant in that kingdom; and left him to determine, whether, if he were not to be supported, he ought not to be removed. Shortly after came two official letters from the Duke of Portland, dated the 16th, in which he entered into a long detail of the various points of view, in which the cabinet wished to have the question of the Catholics considered; on the same day with these came a private letter of his own; dated the 18th. In this his grace dwells most particularly on the necessity of the cabinet having information submitted to them on all these points of view and a detailed plan of all the additional advantages intended to be conceded to the Catholics. He observed, that if the consideration of that great question could be deferred till peace was re-established, he should not have a doubt but that it would be attended with advantages, which, perhaps, are not to be hoped for in any other supposable case: but he added, "that it was surely going too far, to infer from any thing he had said, that he was desired to undertake the task of deferring it to that period. If the cabinet were to accede, what they desired was, to be justified in that accession, by a free and impartial investigation of facts, of circumstances, and of opinions, in which, as of reason, his lordship's would have the most decisive weight; and as he had expressed a wish to have the mode considered in England whilst it was still within his reach, to have it limited or modified before the bill was introduced, and before the plan was known to the Catholics, he wished to have that plan and the heads of the bill transmitted for consideration."

At the moment of his grace's writing this letter, there was not "a fact, a circumstance," or an "opinion" that could have been transmitted to him,
of

of which he was not in possession. He acknowledged, and often referred to Lord Fitzwilliam's letter of the 10th of February, in which he had the plan, the oath, on which the whole depended, on which every thing that regarded the constitution, the ecclesiastical establishment, and the settlement of property rested. He had the primate's opinion, and some ideas that his grace had suggested. The very day after he had written that letter, which pressed for more information, his grace assisted at the cabinet meeting, that unanimously concurred in the necessity of recalling the lord lieutenant: and in a letter of the 21st he summed up all the reasons, why that measure was deemed necessary, without one dissenting voice, for the very preservation of the empire. "Can any thing be more self-evident, or, in order to account for the real causes of my recall, did it require that this letter should be accompanied, as it was, by one from Mr. Pitt of the same date, accepting in fact, the alternative I proposed to him, and declaring himself fully prepared for the event, however he might lament it. It is true indeed, that, for the very first time, he mentions the Catholic business, and declares his concurrence in the general desire of the cabinet to prevent any further progress being made in Mr. Grattan's bill, till they should receive and consider the information, which they thought it their duty to call for. Would you not have supposed from this, that to decide on my government, Mr. Pitt meant to wait till he received farther information from me, respecting the important question of the Catholics? No such thing. By the dereliction of all my friends, and by the prospect of my falling alone, he was prepared to throw out this as a matter, on which to amuse his colleagues at the moment, and the public at a future period: while to myself, without allowing a moment's farther deliberation, he boldly and peremptorily pronounces on what I had determined to be the point to decide on my government. "On the subject of arrangements, he felt bound to adhere to his sentiments, not only with respect to Mr. Beresford, but to the line of conduct adopted in so many instances towards the former supporters of government. "By these sentiments, he must at all events be guided, from a regard to the king's service and to his own honor, however sincerely he might lament the consequences which must arise from the present situation."

"Need I add any comment on this letter? Need I observe to you, that the measure of the Roman Catholics, on which it is now asserted my administration was determined, is here reserved for future consideration, whilst the subject of arrangements is finally and peremptorily decided. At all events, and independent

pendent of every other consideration, his own honor obliges him not to give way on that subject, and however he laments it, he acquiesces in what I had stated to him must be the consequences of such a decision on his part.

Let my friends therefore, my dear Carlisle, no longer suffer the Catholic question to be mentioned, as entering, in the most distant degree, into the causes of my recall."

That letter of the Duke of Portland's was accompanied by one also from Mr. Pitt, which accepted, in fact, of the alternative proposed by Lord Fitzwilliam, and declared he was fully prepared for the event, however he might lament it. In that letter he mentioned, for the first time, the subject of the Catholic business, and declared his concurrence in the general desire of the cabinet to prevent any further progress being made in Mr. Grattan's bill, till they should receive and consider the information, which they thought it their duty to call for. This language upon the Catholic question seems to purport that Mr. Pitt rather adopted the sentiments of others, than spoke his own. But his language upon the dismissals imported directly the reverse. From the purport of this letter and other circumstances, Earl Fitzwilliam was induced to believe, and he published his conviction, that the Catholic question entered for nothing into the real cause of his recall, but that it was solely owing to the dismissal of Mr. Beresford.* Notwithstanding the facts and letters, by which that transaction has been supported and denied by men of the first respectability, the public mind has never been decided upon the subject. The solemn assertions of a nobleman of the most distinguished probity and veracity are in one scale: the contradictions of a whole set of cabinet ministers, backed by a majority in both houses of parliament, are in the other: the reader will give the preponderancy. Thus properly ended the short-lived administration of Earl

* In confirmation of these conclusions of Lord Fitzwilliam, a very strong chain of facts leads every unbiassed man to attribute the extraordinary recall of that viceroy from his government to the preponderancy of Mr. Beresford's interest with the premier, not indeed immediate and personal, but indirect and relative through those, who were well known to possess the strongest influence upon the mind of that minister. Mr. Beresford had been, as his friends termed him, *the faithful servant*, (as his enemies denominated him *the fertile tool*) of every successive chief governor from Lord Townshend to that period. The nature of that gentleman's situation in Ireland did not require any personal communications with the head of the British ministry: consequently his merits could only have been known through the organs of those to whom he so closely adhered. These were the persons, through whom, according to Lord Fitzwilliam, the intelligence of Mr. Beresford's dismissal was indirectly

Earl Fitzwilliam: from which commenced a government of rigor and coercion, the consequences of which will appear in the series of future detail.

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directly conveyed to Mr. Pitt by Mr. Beresford himself; through them those later favorable impressions were worked into the minister's mind, which at last brought it to such peremptory decision against the dismissals, whilst it remained open to information and consultation upon the Catholic question. Therefore, said Lord Fitzwilliam, "let my friends no longer suffer the Catholic question to be mentioned, as entering in the most distant degree into the causes of my recall. Let them listen no longer to that terrifying enumeration of evils and miseries to result to the empire from a measure, which my enemies assert to have considered either as originating with myself exclusively, or as hurried on by me rashly and precipitately, or without consent or consultation. You have seen when the dread of these miseries was first conceived, and when the complaint of this want of consultation was first brought forward. Had Mr. Beresford never been dismissed, we never should have heard of them, and I should have remained. But so remaining, I should have been disgraced. Indeed, disgraced by the failure of all the measures which I had planned for the public welfare, and loaded with all the odium which that gentleman, and his connexions have entailed upon government, to which I had succeeded." Thus in the British House of Peers, Lord Westmorland first set out in praise of Mr. Beresford, whose influence was that of an active and able man, who was zealous in the service of his king and the preservation of the peace and tranquillity of his country: faithful, vigilant and indefatigable in his services: a man of unblemished reputation, who had conducted himself in his high office with so much honor and fidelity. The Marquis Townshend wished for nothing more earnestly than an opportunity of meeting any invidious charges against Mr. Beresford. The Marquis of Buckingham bore the strongest testimony to the loyalty and attachment of Mr. Beresford to his majesty, and felt himself called upon by justice and gratitude to declare, that during his administration of that country he found him a man of high honor and correct integrity. Lord Auckland concurred in that testimony to the character of Mr. Beresford, who had been twenty-five years in the service of the public. It was evident from the forward and strained eulogies which these noble lords delivered of Mr. Beresford's worth and virtue, that they made a common cause with him, that they considered his disgrace as the condemnation of their administration, and his dismissal as the immediate and exclusive cause of Earl Fitzwilliam's recall. The following part of Lord Fitzwilliam's speech in the House of Lords develops much of this mysterious transaction: it was not then replied to, and has never since been answered. "If he had before conceived that the Catholic question was not the genuine cause of his recall, he was now convinced of the fact. The noble Earl had returned from Ireland according to his own account, only with the intention to govern it more securely. He had declared that he had, even before his return, Mr. Pitt's promise that his friends should not be removed from their situations, and he had no sooner set his foot in England, than he had procured these promises to be renewed, and had taken care to embarrass the new arrangement of the administration. To this in so many words, did his own account of the conference with ministers tend. And it certainly was most perfectly true, that the noble Earl had taken all the measures in his power to embarrass the future administration in Ireland; for what other purpose could the granting a reversion for two lives of a place of 2300*l.* a year to Lord Fitzgibbon serve? He had not been two days in Ireland before

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The professed plan of the new administration was little calculated to gratify the feelings of those, who had so long concurred in the support of systems diametrically the reverse. On the 17th of February, Mr. Graydon recapitulated the duty of the house in watching with scrupulous vigilance the expenditure of the public money, and the adoption of every practical measure of retrenchment, at a crisis so arduous as the present, when the country was called on for a greater supply than ever was known at any former period.

He professed his determination to bring forward, with permission of the house, a strict inquiry into every branch of the public expence. For the present, he should begin by moving, that a committee be appointed to inquire into the expenditures of the revenue established for twenty years past, the number of additional officers appointed in each year, with the names of the persons, and salary annexed to each office.

The chancellor of the exchequer said, he should not resist the motion, unless it had for its object the censure of the revenue board.

Mr. Grattan avowed vigilance over the public expenditures, and retrenchment of expences, as principal objects of the present administration, more especially in the revenue department, where, he was convinced, great abuses had existed. As the honorable member had moved the inquiry, he should have his concurrence and support, and every aid consistent with the variety of his avocations.

Sir Laurence Parsons wished the measure had been suffered to come from administration, as most likely, in that case, to be efficient.

Mr. Mason professed himself ready to contribute his aid most cheerfully to the inquiry proposed by the honorable member, and he could answer to the same purpose for the commissioners of the revenue.

Mr. Graydon's motion was carried (being only opposed by the single negative of Colonel Blaquiere) and the committee was appointed to sit on the morrow.

The resolutions of the cabinet were not instantly followed up by a recall: the fact was confidentially known to many, though publicly avowed

he discovered what the noble Earl now owned to be the case, before he was convinced of his intention to embarrass the king's government, and that a very perfect system had been formed with the ministers at home for accomplishing that end. That which he had sensibly felt in Ireland was now avowed in England, and it seemed there was no hesitation in acknowledging the course which had been previously arranged."

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by none. The same parliamentary conduct was pursued, as if no such change were in agitation. On the 17th of February * Mr. Grattan, after a few observations on the inadequacy of the police establishment to the protection of the citizens, and the enormity of its expences, moved the house to come to the following resolution, “ that the present police is an experiment found to be “ inadequate for the protection of the citizens, and exorbitant in its expence ; “ and it is therefore expedient that it be put down by act of parliament, and an “ institution for the establishment of a parochial watch instituted in its stead.”

Mr. Marcus Beresford dissented from this resolution, as going to contradict what the house had so often resolved to be otherwise, and in as much as the police had proved infinitely superior to any establishment for the same purpose.

The question was put and carried in the affirmative without a division. Petitions continued to flow in daily from different bodies of the Catholics: but nothing worthy of particular notice occurred till the 26th of the month, at which time the recall of the viceroy was spoken of as a certainty. On that day Sir Lawrence Parsons, who with Mr. Duquerry had hitherto stood alone in opposition to the government upon the question of war, rose and said, † that with the deepest concern he noticed a prevailing rumour, that their viceroy was about to retire from the high station which he filled. He hoped it was false: for that nobleman’s public and private virtues not only endeared him to all ranks of people, under whose auspicious administration, and the talents and integrity of those gentlemen who aided his councils, the people of Ireland were taught to expect the adoption of measures the most salutary for their happiness, conciliation, and prosperity. He trusted that if it were, the right honorable and honorable members opposite to him, who possessed the confidence of government, would say so candidly, and that they would go still further, and state also the cause.

Pausing a minute and receiving no immediate answer, Sir Lawrence added, he was sorry to be obliged to construe the silence of the right honorable and honorable gentlemen into a confirmation of this rumour; and he deplored most deeply the event, which, at the present time, must tend to throw alarming doubts on the promises, which had been held out to the people, of measures to be adopted for the promotion of their happiness, the conciliation of their minds, and the common attachment of every class of his majesty’s faithful

* 15 Par. Deb. 121.

† 15 Par. Deb. 122.

subjects of Ireland, in support of the same happy constitution. If those measures were now to be relinquished, which gentlemen had promised with so much confidence to the country, and on the faith of which, the house had been called on to vote the enormous sum of one million seven hundred thousand pounds, he must consider his country as brought to the most awful and alarming crisis she had ever known in any period of her history.

If the rumoured resignation of Earl Fitzwilliam arose from any new restriction on his wishes to realize the professions of his administration, or to fill his high station with honor, his resignation reflected the highest lustre on the dignity of his nature and the purity of his principles; but as he still hoped measures had not proceeded to that length, which must deprive this country at so awful, so interesting, and so critical a period, of the auspices of a nobleman, who came the harbinger and the hostage of her political salvation, he thought the best measure to be adopted was to move for an address to his excellency to implore his continuance amongst them. He had on the spur of the occasion drawn heads of an address for the purpose; to the form or wording of which he had no partial attachment, but should submit it to such alteration and amendment as the house should think proper to adopt.

Mr. Duquery seconded the motion, and entered on a striking but gloomy picture of the situation of his country, under circumstances so truly to be deprecated as the departure of Earl Fitzwilliam, and the defeat of those measures which were to have been the pride and glory of his administration, and most likely the salvation of the country. The rumour had already thrown a gloom over the public countenance, and cast a despondency into the popular bosom, and he could not reflect, but with sorrow and alarm, on the consequence which might follow the going forth of those circumstances to the country.

He justified himself and the honorable baronet from the idea (which he disdained) of a peevish opposition. He confessed he and the honorable baronet differed from gentlemen on the other side of the house respecting a ruinous war, and in some points of taxation, which bore heavily on the poor; but they had, however, agreed in all that they conceived necessary to the prosperity and happiness of the country, and the exigencies of the government; but if after voting the enormous supply of 1,700,000*l.* to save, if possible, the empire from destruction, they were to be deprived of the administration of the nobleman, to whom the people looked up with confidence, he feared the great and salutary measures of reform, retrenchment, and re-

sponsibility

sponsibility would vanish, and the Catholics of Ireland, instead of the accomplishment of their hopes, would have the gate of the castle flapped in their faces, and be refused the blessings of the constitution.

He made severe observations on Mr. Pitt's conduct, who, not satisfied with having involved the empire in a disastrous war, intended to complete the mischief by risking the internal peace of Ireland, making the friends of that country the dupes of his fraud and artifice, in order to swindle the nation out of 1,700,000*l.* to support the war, on the faith of measures which it now seemed were to be refused.

Mr. George Ponsonby hoped it would not be imputed to any idea of disrespect, if he declined to answer the question touching an alleged rumour, and hoped he should be excused for moving the order of the day; the subject was delicate; no man in that house was authorized to admit or contradict the rumour; the house had not any cognizance on the matter to warrant parliamentary proceeding; a day would come, and was not far distant, when he, for one, should have no objection to answer any questions; he suggested the prudence of withdrawing the motion for the present, to which

Sir Lawrence Parsons acceded.

On the 2d of March, Sir Lawrence Parsons made a very violent speech, in which he severely reprobated the conduct of the British cabinet, with reference to Earl Fitzwilliam. But the great object of the motion he meant to make, was to calm the public mind, to give the people an assurance, that the measures which were proposed, would not be abandoned; that the parliament would keep the means in their hands until they were accomplished; and that they would not be prorogued until they were fairly and fully discussed. He did not pretend to say specifically what these measures were. The first he believed to be the Catholic bill; and if a resistance to any one measure more than another was likely to promote dreadful consequences it was this. He said nothing as to the original propriety of the measure; but this much he would say, that if the Irish administration had countenanced the Catholics in this expectation, without the concurrence of the British cabinet, they had much to answer for. On the other hand, if the British cabinet had held out an assent, and had afterwards retracted; if the dæmon of darkness should come from the infernal regions upon earth, and throw a fire-brand amongst the people, he could not do more to promote mischief. The hopes of the public were raised, and in one instant they were blasted. If the house

did not resent that insult to the nation and to themselves, they would in his mind be most contemptible ; for although a majority of the people might submit to have their rights withheld, they would never submit to be mocked in so barefaced a manner. The case was not as formerly, when all the parliament of Ireland was against the Catholics ; and to back them, the force of England. Now, although the claim of the Catholics was well known and understood, not one petition controverting it had been presented from Protestants in any part of Ireland. No remonstrance appeared, no county meeting had been held. What was to be inferred from all this, but that the sentiments of the Protestants were for the emancipation of the Catholics ? A meeting was held on Saturday last at the Royal Exchange, of the merchants and traders of the metropolis, which was as numerously attended as the limits of that building would admit. The governor of the Bank of Ireland was in the chair. An address was resolved on to his excellency Lord Fitzwilliam, full of affection, and resolutions strong as they could be in countenance of the Catholic claim. He would ask them, was the British minister to controul all the interests, talents, and inclinations in that country ? He protested to God, that in all the history he had read, he had never met with a parallel of such ominous infatuation as that by which he appeared to be led. " Let him persevere," said he, " and you must encrease your army to myriads ; every man must have five or six dragoons in his house." He moved, " that the words in the money bill (then before the house) the 25th of March, 1796, should be expunged, and the words 25th of May inserted " in their room."

Mr. Tighe, junior, in a few words approved of the sentiments delivered by the honorable baronet, and seconded his motion.

Mr. Conolly complimented the honorable baronet upon the able manner in which he had brought forward the question. If he should not hear something very satisfactory, he would certainly vote for the motion.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer and Mr. Monk Mason most severely reprobated the motion, as contravening the principles of the very gentlemen who supported it. It was a motion fraught with inconsistency, mischief, and danger. Several gentlemen spoke with great warmth upon the subject on both sides. Mr. Duquerry was very pointed on the conduct of the British cabinet. He entreated the treasury bench not to interfere, but to leave gentlemen to the impulse of their honest feelings. He had long watched the British cabinet,

cabinet, and had ever discerned in it a strong propensity to treat Ireland with insult and contempt. It had done so in 1779, and 1783, and was brought to reason by a short money bill. He pledged himself, that if tried a third time it would succeed. Lord Milton called upon the house to go along with him in the delicate situation in which he stood, and in consideration of the painful sensations of his mind. It was not for him to go into the motives of gentlemen in their actions, as had been done in the course of the debate; it was sufficient for him, to hear their arguments and reasoning, and upon these grounds to form his opinion. But he must say at once, that it was impossible for him to assent to a motion so fraught with danger to the whole empire. What inducement could be so tempting to the Frenchmen to endeavour to land on our coasts as a short money bill? What greater damp could be thrown upon their military arrangements than to find them two months hence as backward as they then were, which must be a consequence if the motion should pass, by retarding the recruiting service. What stronger encouragement could be given to incendiaries, if incendiaries there were in the country, than for the House of Commons to withhold the supplies from government? Seeing so much loyalty, so much spirit, so much attachment to the crown on the commencement of the session, at every part of the house, he was surely safe in relying upon the feelings of gentlemen, and trusting to their moderation. However high the character of the nobleman at the head of the government, however respected, and justly respected, and elevated his rank, if that consideration should weigh against the public cause, he should be very sorry, he should be very much mortified and utterly disappointed.

Towards the close of a long debate Mr. Conolly proposed a mediation or composition: not but that he considered a three months money bill, and one for nine months afterwards, as good security as one for a year. He insisted, that the strength of Ireland lay in its confidence in the present administration. The speaker wished Mr. Conolly not to press his compromise, and the house divided, 24 for and 146 against Sir Lawrence Parsons' motion. Mr. Conolly then proposed three resolutions. "1. That his excellency Earl Fitzwilliam
" had, by his conduct since his arrival in that kingdom, merited the thanks
" of that house and the confidence of the people. 2. That to prorogue the
" parliament before the grievances, of which the people complained were
" redressed, would be highly inexpedient. 3. That the foregoing resolutions
" be laid before his majesty." The first of these resolutions was carried unanimously;

nimously; the two other, at the instance of Lord Milton and Mr. Grattan,* were withdrawn. On the next day, the speaker reported to the house his excellency's answer to the resolution of the preceding day: viz. "that it gave him infinite satisfaction to find by that unanimous resolution, that his public conduct since his arrival in that kingdom, had appeared to them to be deserving of their thanks, and to entitle him to the confidence of the people." On the 10th of March, the house adjourned to the 24th, when the money bills were carried up to the lords,† and the house then further adjourned

* 15 Par. Deb. p. 142. It was an unprecedented singularity, that Mr. Grattan should have assisted at a debate of so much importance, and so interesting to his feelings, without joining in it. Although it must be presumed, that the bent of his opinion was for a short money bill, yet the sympathizing respect for the lord lieutenant held him back, lest it should be objected, that the objects they contended for, were men, not measures; and that rather than fail, they were ready to obstruct the business and counteract the welfare of the nation. Mr. Barrington, who opposed the motion, not ineptly represented the government in an unexampled situation: officers without offices, and ministers without place or responsibility; with particular allusion to Mr. Grattan.

† The following was the speech on delivering the money bills. "The commons attend your excellency with their supplies, which go to the utmost extent of every estimate and desire laid before them by his majesty's ministers, and are much larger than have been ever granted in any one session; but it is their determined resolution at all times to stand or fall with Great Britain; and that resolution is now, if possible, still more strengthened by every circumstance of foreign and internal consideration in these eventful times, they therefore feel it their duty, their interest, and their anxious wish, to support the empire through the present unprovoked and destructive war, with all that is most dear to them, their lives and fortunes.

"In their appropriation of these supplies, they have shewn their early attention to the sure and national strength of the British empire, her navy, by granting 200,000*l.* for procuring seamen; and they have provided for augmenting the militia, an institution which, by the indefatigable exertions both of men and officers, is the admiration, and will be the salvation of this kingdom.

"It is owing to the unexampled prosperity and growing resources of the nation, that they now offer to his majesty, without laying much additional burthen on the people, or lessening those bounties and pecuniary encouragements under which trade and manufactures have increased and are increasing, and the same causes have allowed them, amidst these liberal supplies, to gratify his majesty's paternal benevolence, and their own anxious feelings, by relieving all the poorer classes from the tax of hearth-money.

"Satisfied, however, that those resources and that prosperity cannot be permanent without an effectual attention to the sobriety of the people, to their morals, and peaceable subordination to the laws, they have, by an arrangement of duties, which promises also an increase of revenue, relieved the brewery from all restriction of taxes, so as to give it a decided advantage over the distillery, and thereby discourage the too frequent or immoderate use of spirituous liquors, a
"measure

journed to the 13th of April, in order to allow time for the new arrangements.

The report of Earl Fitzwilliam's intended removal was no sooner credited, than an universal despondency, in some instances bordering on desperation, seized the whole nation. Meetings were formed throughout the kingdom, in order to convey to their beloved and respected governor, their high sense of his virtue and patriotism, and their just indignation at his and their country's enemies. The deep and settled spirit of discontent which at this time pervaded all ranks of people, was not confined to the Catholics. The Dissenters and as many of the Protestants of the establishment, as had not an interest in that monopoly of power and influence, which Earl Fitzwilliam had so openly attacked and so fearfully alarmed, felt the irresistible effect: all good Irishmen beheld with sorrow and indignation, the reconciliation of all parties, interests, and religions defeated, the cup of national union dashed from their eager lips, and the spirit of discord let loose upon the kingdom with an enlarged commission to enflame, aggravate, and destroy. Such were the feelings, and such the language of those, who deplored the removal of that nobleman, in the critical moment of giving peace, strength, and prosperity to their country. And how large a part of the Irish nation lamented the loss of their truly patriotic governor, may be read in the numberless addresses and resolutions, that poured in upon him both before and after his actual departure, expressive of their grief, despair, and indignation at that ominous event. They came from every description of persons, but from Right Boys, Defenders, and the old dependants upon the Castle. The Catholics of Dublin took the lead and the most effectual means, they could devise for preventing the removal of Lord Fitzwilliam from his government:*

they

“ measure which must conduce to sobriety, tranquillity and content, and under which the people, encouraged to regular industry, and the consequent acquisition of wealth, must feel the blessings of the happy constitution under which they live, and cherish and preserve it from all change or innovation.”

* At a most numerous and respectable meeting of the Catholics of the city of Dublin, convened by public notice, at the Chapel, Francis Street, on Friday the 27th of February, 1795.

EDWARD BYRNE, in the Chair.

The gentlemen who summoned this meeting, viz. Mr. Byrne, Mr. Hamill, Mr. M'Donnel, Dr. Ryan, Dr. M'Neven, Mr. Keogh, Mr. Braughall, Mr. Sweetman, Mr. M'Cormick, having stated that a report was circulated, with great confidence, that the bill for the total emancipation

of

they deputed three of their body to present a petition to the king at the levee, praying on behalf of their body, that his majesty would be graciously pleased to continue his excellency in the government of Ireland.

On

of the Catholics of Ireland was, under the influence of the British cabinet, to be resisted in parliament; and consequently, that this country was soon to be deprived of our present valuable and most respected viceroy.

“ *Resolved* unanimously, that the said gentlemen do forthwith frame an address to his majesty, expressive of our feelings in the present momentous and alarming crisis.”

And the said address having been accordingly prepared and read, paragraph by paragraph,

“ *Resolved*, with one dissentient to one paragraph only, that the said address do stand as the address of the Catholics of Dublin.

“ *Resolved* unanimously, that Edward Byrne, Esq. John Keogh, Esq. and Baron Hufsey, of Galtrim, be and are hereby requested to present the said address to his majesty in person.

“ *Resolved* unanimously, that the above gentlemen be directed to frame and deliver proper instructions to our deputation, now appointed to present our address to his majesty.

“ *Resolved* unanimously, that it appears to this meeting, that his excellency Earl Fitzwilliam is about to depart from this country a singular and splendid instance of a viceroy: sacrificing power and situation to the interest of Ireland; in consequence, as we apprehend, of a negative put upon his virtuous attempts to reform inveterate abuses in the government, to call to his councils men possessing the confidence of the nation, and to receive to the bosom of the constitution a whole people.

“ *Resolved* therefore, unanimously, that an address expressive of our esteem, veneration, and affection for our present viceroy, and of our sincere anxiety at the reports of his speedy departure, be forthwith prepared.”

And the same having been accordingly prepared and read, paragraph by paragraph,

“ *Resolved* unanimously, that the said address do stand as the address of the Catholics of Dublin, and that it be presented to his excellency in the most respectful manner.

“ *Resolved* unanimously, that the above gentlemen be, and are hereby intrusted in our name, and on our behalf to address the Right Honorable Henry Grattan, the mover of our bill, and the other noblemen and gentlemen, who engaged to second and support it, and to testify to them the grateful sense we entertain of their liberality, patriotism and justice.

“ *Resolved* unanimously, that the sincere thanks of this meeting be, and are hereby presented to the inhabitants of Belfast, for their early, steady, and uniform support of Catholic emancipation; a conduct, which at once evinces their love of liberty, their loyalty to their sovereign, and their attachment to the principles of the constitution.

“ *Resolved* unanimously, that the thanks of the Catholics of Dublin, being justly due, are hereby most respectfully offered to the gentlemen who summoned this meeting, for their very proper conduct and spirited exertions on our behalf.

“ *Resolved* unanimously, that a report of the state of the Catholics, from the passing of the late act in their favor, to this day be prepared, and that the said report be laid before the Catholics of Dublin at their next meeting.”

Mr.

On the 5th of March, the Duke of Leinster in the House of Lords rose, at a late hour, and after prefacing what he was about to propose, with a warm and affectionate eulogy upon the character of Lord Fitzwilliam, moved the following resolution, "that his excellency Earl Fitzwilliam since his arrival in this kingdom has by his public conduct merited the thanks of this house and the confidence of the country." Lord Dillon opposed the motion: all he found, that his excellency had done since his arrival, was to displace certain gentlemen from office, by which an expence of 2,200*l.* per annum had been imposed on the country. Earl Portarlington supported the resolution: spoke highly in commendation of the lord lieutenant, and asserted, that he had done more for the advantage of the country in some few weeks, than others had done in so many years. The Marquis of Waterford, though he had always from his youth wished well to the Roman Catholics, thought they were more personally indebted to the beneficence of their sovereign than to his lieutenant, and was against the motion. Lord Dunfany supported and the Bishop of Cloyne opposed the resolution. Lord Glentworth opposed the resolution, and launched out into a panegyric on the Westmorland administration. Lord Donoughmore spoke the most at large and vehemently in support of the resolution. It was impossible that every one should not know, in how eminent a degree the noble earl possessed the confidence of the country. He referred to the addresses of affection and respect from without doors, which had been pouring in from every corner of the kingdom; all descriptions of persons, all political and all religious opinions blended in one unanimous expression of reliance upon his excellency's virtues and the principles of his administration. He referred to the agreement of the Commons on every great question touching his excellency's government, their unanimous adoption of a similar resolution, and above all, to the extraordinary magnitude of the supply, vast beyond precedent, and confided to his excellency with a confidence wholly unexampled. The Bishop of Ossory warmly supported the resolution; he entered with great energy into the commendation of Lord Fitzwilliam's virtues: he had come over to that kingdom

Mr. Byrne having left the chair, and Mr. Braughall having taken it,

"*Resolved* unanimously, that our thanks are presented to Edward Byrne, Esq. for his very proper and dignified conduct in the chair.

" By Order of the Meeting,

" RICHARD M'CORMICK, Sec.

with the purest views of correcting abuses and establishing permanent peace and harmony throughout the kingdom. He was followed in the same strain by his brother of Killala. The chancellor said, he had high respect for Lord Fitzwilliam, and was ready to compliment his lordship in any terms becoming the dignity of that assembly: but the resolution brought so strongly to his mind the phraseology of the French convention; and if the noble mover of the resolution would not amend it, he would himself propose an amendment: at which the Duke of Leinster was so fore, that he declared, seldom as he troubled their lordships on any occasion, if he were so unfortunate as to have his resolution rejected, he never would open his lips within those walls again. The chancellor finding that the Duke persisted in his resolution, was about to propose an amendment, when the Bishop of Ossory moved, that the words, *the confidence and thanks of this house*, should be substituted for the words *the thanks of this house and confidence of the nation*; with which amendment the resolution passed. There was evident propriety in this amendment: for the confidence of the lords was all that was wanting to complete the full expression of the confidence of the whole disinterested and independent part of the people, after the unanimous vote of their representatives in the commons, and the unequivocal approbation of all classes out of parliament.

This period of Irish history has been particularly marked with misrepresentation and obloquy.* That it led to fatal events, is notoriously true. Inasmuch, however, as the most opposite effects have been generally attributed to the same causes by the opposite parties in Ireland, and even in Great Britain, historical justice requires an undisguised statement of the facts. The annexation of causes and effects will rest with the impartial reader.

The ferment in the country was greatly increased by the rumours that were then afloat concerning these extraordinary movements in the cabinets of both kingdoms. No sooner had the original plan of Irish reform been projected and agreed upon by the Portland part of the British cabinet, than Mr.

* Lord Clare observed, (Speech on Union, p. 72) " I state with perfect confidence, that the
 " seditious and treasonable conspiracies which have brought this country to the verge of ruin, are
 " the natural offspring of the adjustment of 1782: the convulsion in 1789 gave birth to the Whig
 " institution: the rebel confederacy of the Irish union was an improvement upon it; and we now
 " see the reliques of the Whig institution in the mask of liberty, inculcating the principles, and
 " adopting the means originally devised by the rebel confederacy of the Irish union, to abolish the
 " religion, and subvert the monarchy of Ireland.

Beresford, who well knew that his political power would be put down, applied to a higher power in order to support himself against the attack whenever it should be made. In the preceding autumn he had flown to England on the first rumour of Lord Fitzwilliam's appointment, and had followed his majesty to Weymouth, where he had been honored with a private audience, in which he is reported to have represented in the most lively colours his uniform attachment to every administration during a period of twenty-five years, his decided hatred to reforms of government of every kind, and the repeated assurances of protection which he had invariably received from that party, which had long been known by the title of the King's Friends. Surer protection he could not have received. By command from the highest authority he attended a council, in which the restoration of himself and friends was unanimously voted: and he received a letter in Mr. Pitt's own hand writing, directing him to return to Ireland immediately and resume his situation at the revenue board; and to assure his friends, the attorney and solicitor general, that the king would not accept of their resignations: and at the same time orders were dispatched to the lord-lieutenant of a similar tendency, from the office of his friend the Duke of Portland. With the knowledge of these facts, the Catholics sent over the three gentlemen already mentioned, hoping, that as their former refuge to the royal patronage had defeated the combined power of the Irish government and parliament, this second application would at least counteract the private efforts of one or more individuals actually in opposition to his majesty's government. They little knew the vast powers of the internal wheels of the cabinet. By them Earl Fitzwilliam's administration, supported as it was by the native independence of all Ireland, was overset with the same facility, with which an excise-man would have been displaced. The nation felt indignant at what they considered an insult and humiliation to the Irish government. The body of Catholics, who had been buoyed up with the hopes of reaping the first fruits of the happy principles of the new administration in their own emancipation, followed a policy perhaps more honorable than prudent, of making the most open and unequivocal professions of the motives, views, and principles, which actuated them in their efforts to attain the full participation of the constitutional liberties of their regenerated country. On the 27th of February, 1795, the Catholics of Dublin, at a meeting in Francis-street, appointed two gentlemen of their body to present an address to Mr. Grattan, which fully spoke

their feelings and sentiments of the then political posture of affairs : to which they received an immediate answer,* which has been more censured by the enemies,

* As there will be future occasion to refer to this address and answer, they are now submitted to the view of the reader :

“ To the Right Hon. HENRY GRATTAN.

“ SIR,

“ WE are instructed by the Catholics of Dublin to offer you their humble tribute of thanks and gratitude, as well for the eminent services which you have rendered to this kingdom on various occasions, as for your able and generous exertions in their cause. It is not easy to do justice to the merits of a man, whose name is connected with the most brilliant events of his time, and who has already obtained the highest of all titles, the Deliverer of his Country : but though it is impossible to add to your fame, by any terms we can employ, it must be grateful to you to learn, that you have a place, not only in the administration, but in the affections of your countrymen.

“ To be thus loved and admired, is surely an enviable distinction. It may not, perhaps, be sufficient to preserve or purchase station and power at court, but to a well-formed mind it is a source of purer satisfaction, than the favor and protection even of monarchs or their ministers.

“ Few men have had it in their power to do so much for their native land as you have done for Ireland. When you first entered into public life, garrison habits, and provincial prejudices, were opposed to Irish interests and feelings ; and what was still more discouraging, the different descriptions of people in this country, far from being to meet in a common point for their mutual advantage, were kept asunder by perverse and unintelligible antipathies of a religious nature. Into this chaos of contradiction you infused your spirit, and brought order in some measure out of confusion.

“ The first effort of your eloquence, was to rouse the Irish parliament to assert its own dependence ; and notwithstanding the habits of subjection which particular causes had induced, you were successful.

“ At present you are engaged in a pursuit equally honorable to your head, and still more to your heart. As mover of the Catholic bill, you are endeavouring to inculcate the necessity of moderation and justice, where you before inspired courage ; and urging men who triumphed over foreign supremacy, to an act of much greater dignity and difficulty, a sacrifice of the prejudices of their youth and education.

“ In this work, so full of genius and public spirit, and which goes to the creation of a people, as your former exertions went to the forming a constitution, you have already made considerable progress ; and when you and your illustrious friends were called to the councils of a virtuous viceroy, we looked with confidence to the accomplishment of your patriotic intentions.

“ Some enemy, however, to the king and to the people, has interposed his malignant and wicked suggestions, and endeavoured to throw obstacles in the way of our total emancipation. But we are far from giving way to sentiments of dependency and alarm. We feel the justice of our pretensions ; and we are persuaded that what is just will prevail over the arts of perfidy and falsehood.

“ What

enemies, and applauded by the friends of that gentleman, than any thing that ever came from his mouth.

Soon

“ What gives us the most sensible satisfaction, is the general union of sentiment that pervades all ranks and descriptions of Irishmen on the present occasion. Never before did Ireland speak with a voice so unanimous. Protestants and Catholics are at this moment united, and seem to have no other contest, but who shall resent most the outrage that has been offered to Irish pride, in the intended removal of a patriotic viceroy from the government, and you and your friends from the councils of this kingdom.

“ For our own part, it shall be our study to cultivate an union so happily begun. We have no selfish or narrow views. We do not wish to acquire privileges for ourselves in order to abridge the privileges of others ; for we know that in matters of liberty and constitution, to give is to gain.

“ With regard to the men who may have the hardihood to take the situations, which you and your friends are about to lay down, if unfortunately for this country such an event should happen, we shall only say, that we do not envy them the sensations which they must take up at the same time ; that man's temper must be of steel, who can hold up his head amidst the hisses of a betrayed and irritated nation.

“ As to you and your friends, your departure from power will not disturb the serenity of your minds. The veneration and gratitude of the people will attend you in retirement, and will preserve you from reflections, which must be the portion of those who may be your dismal and melancholy successors.

“ Signed by order,

“ THOMAS BRAUGHALL, } Secretaries.”
“ JOHN SWEETMAN, }

To which Mr. GRATTAN was pleased to return the following answer.

“ IN supporting you, I support the Protestant : we have but one interest and one honor ; and whoever gives privileges to you, gives vigor to all. The Protestant already begins to perceive it : a late attack rallied the scattered spirits of the country from the folly of religious schism to the recollection of national honor, and a nation's feuds are lost in a nation's resentment. Your emancipation will pass, rely on it ; your emancipation must pass : it may be death to one viceroy—it will be the peace-offering of another ; and the laurel may be torn from the dead brow of one governor, to be craftily converted into the olive of his successor.

“ Let me advise you by no means to postpone the consideration of your fortunes till after the war : rather let Britain receive the benefits of your zeal during the exigency which demands it ; and you yourselves, while you are fighting to preserve the blessings of a constitution, have really and *bona fide* those blessings.

“ My wish is, that you may be free now : there is no other policy which is not low and little : let us at once instantly embrace and greatly emancipate.

“ On this principle I mean to introduce your bill, with your permission, immediately after the recess.

“ You

Soon after that answer had been given, the Whig Club, of which the leading friends and supporters of Earl Fitzwilliam's administrations were members, published

" You are pleased to speak of the confidence and power with which for a moment I was supposed to have been possessed.

" When his majesty's ministers were pleased to resort to our support, they took us with the incumbrance of our reputation, and with all our debts and mortgages which we owed to our country.

" To have accepted a share of a confidence and council without a view to private advantage, will not meet I hope with the disapprobation of my country ; but to have accepted that share without any view to public advantage, would have been refinement of the folly of ambition. Measures, therefore, public measures and arrangements, and that which is now disputed, were stipulated by us—were promised in one quarter, and with assurances they were not resisted in another.

" In the service of government, under his excellency's administration, we directed our attention to two great objects, the kingdom and the empire. We obtained certain beneficial laws—the discovery and reformation of certain abuses, and were in progress to reform more ; we obtained a great force and a great supply, with the consent and confidence of the people. These were not the measures of courtiers—they were the measures of ministers.

" His excellency, Lord Fitzwilliam, may boast that he offered to the empire the affections of millions, a better aid to the war than his enemies can furnish, who have forfeited those affections, and put themselves in their place.

" So decidedly have the measures of Ireland served the empire, that those who were concerned in them, might appeal from the cabals of the British cabinet to the sense of the British nation. I know of no cause afforded for the displeasure of the British cabinet ; but if services done to Ireland are crimes which cannot be atoned for by exertions for the empire, I must lament the gloomy prospects of both kingdoms, and receive a discharge from the service of government as the only honor an English minister can confer on an Irish subject.

" I conceive the continuance of Lord Fitzwilliam is necessary for the prosperity of this kingdom : his firm integrity is formed to correct, his mild manners to reconcile, and his private example to discountenance a progress of vulgar and rapid pollution : if he is to retire, I condole with my country—for myself, the pangs on that occasion, I should feel on rendering up my small portion of ministerial breath would be little, were it not for the gloomy prospects afforded by those dreadful guardians which are likely to succeed. I tremble at the return to power of your old task-master ; that combination which galled the country with its tyranny, insulted her by its manners, exhausted her by its rapacity, and slandered her by its malice : should such a combination at once, inflamed as it must be now by the favor of the British court, and by the reprobation of the Irish people, return to power, I have no hesitation to say, that they will extinguish Ireland, or Ireland must remove them : it is not your case only, but that of the nation. I find the country already committed in the struggle ; I beg to be committed along with her, and to abide the issues of her fortunes.

" I should have expected that there had been a wisdom and faith in some quarter of another country that would have prevented such catastrophe ; but I know it is no proof of that wisdom,

" to

lished the following declaration and resolution:—" The Whig Club at this
 " interesting period, deems it proper to declare its concurrence in sentiment
 " with the several counties, cities, and meetings, with expressing their regret
 " at the departure of Earl Fitzwilliam from the government of this country,
 " have manifested their anxiety for the reform of abuses, and the union of the
 " people of all descriptions; and have also remonstrated against the re-esta-
 " blishment of the old system of violence and venality, necessarily attendant
 " on the return into power of the authors of that system. The Whig Club
 " returns its unanimous thanks to Mr. Grattan, for his manly, seasonable,
 " and constitutional answer to the address of the Roman Catholics of Dublin
 " (Signed) THOMAS CONOLLY, Sec."

Addressees and resolutions were daily multiplied from different bodies of Roman Catholics, who not content with having addressed his majesty, his viceregent, and parliament, now addressed particular characters of extraordinary influence or supposed power in the country, as the last resort of this desponding body of men, importuning them to prevent the threatened catastrophe. All however was fruitless. On the 25th of March, 1795, Lord Fitzwilliam took his departure from Ireland, when the resentment, grief, and indignation of the public were most strongly marked. It was a day of general gloom: the shops were shut; no business of any kind was transacted, and the whole city put on mourning. His coach was drawn to the water-side by some of the most respectable citizens, and cordial sorrow appeared on every countenance. The reception of Earl Camden, who arrived in Dublin five days after, wore a very different complexion: displeasure appeared generally: many strong traits of disapprobation were exhibited, and some of the populace were so outrageous, that it became necessary to call out a military force in order to quell the disturbances that ensued.

Still the rage for meetings and addressees continued. On the 9th of April a most numerous and respectable meeting of the Catholics was had in their chapel in Francis Street, to receive the report of their delegates, who had pre-

" to take the taxes, continue the abuses, damp the zeal, and dash away the affection of so im-
 " portant a member of the empire as the people of Ireland; and when this country came forward,
 " cordial and confident with the offering of her treasure and blood, and resolute to stand or fall with
 " the British nation, it is, I say, no proof of wisdom nor generosity to select that moment to plant
 " a dagger in her heart.

" But whatsoever shall be the event, I will adhere to her interests to the last moment of my life."

sented

presented their petition at St. James's : when Mr. Keogh reported, that in execution of their mission they had on the 13th of March presented their petition to his majesty, and had received what was generally termed a gracious reception. That they had afterwards felt it their duty to request an audience with the Duke of Portland, the secretary of state for the home department, to receive such information as he should think fit to impart relative to his majesty's determination on the subject of their address. That his grace declined giving any information whatever, save that his majesty had imparted his pleasure thereon to the lord lieutenant, and that he was the proper channel, through which that information should pass. Here their mission was determined. Mr. Keogh continued to deliver his sentiments upon the critical situation of affairs, and amongst many strong things, which fell from him, one observation gave particular offence to government. He was not, he said, sorry that the measure had been attempted, though it had been defeated : for it pointed out one fact at least, in which the feelings of every Irishman were interested, and by which the Irish legislature would be roused to a sense of its own dignity. It shewed that the internal regulations of Ireland, to which alone an Irish parliament was competent, were to be previously adjusted by a British cabinet. A very animated debate ensued ; in which the speakers emulated each other in enhancing the strength, power, and advantages of Irish union, and some of them like Lord Clare, Mr. Conolly, and other gentlemen in parliament, deprecated an union with Great Britain, to which they saw the present system of measures was obviously directed. Whilst this debate was going on, a very large party of the young men of the college came into the chapel, and were most honorably received. Some of them joined in the debate. They came that hour from presenting an address to Mr. Grattan, to thank and congratulate with him upon his patriotic efforts in the cause of Catholic emancipation and the reform of those abuses, which had enflamed public indignation, to which Mr. Grattan made an appropriate answer.* The freedom of speech used by the

* The following is the address presented on Thursday the 9th of April to Mr. Grattan, by the Students of the University.

To the Right Honorable HENRY GRATTAN.

" WE the students of the university of Dublin, entering with the warmest sympathy into the
 " universal feeling and interest of our countrymen, beg leave to unite our voice with theirs in de-
 " claring our admiration of your great and uncommon talents, and a reliance on your steady pa-
 " triotism

the gentlemen, who took part in this debate, gave no small offence to the old party of the castle, who now considered their permanence in power as irrevocably fixed. The spirit, which actuated them in their whole conduct, was a higher sublimation of those principles, to which the Marquis of Buckingham

“triotism and unshaken integrity. We have with sorrow beheld the removal of a beloved viceroy, whose arrival we regarded as the promise of public reform, and his presence the pledge of general tranquillity.

“If this event should be accompanied (as we have reason to apprehend) by your removal from his majesty’s councils in this kingdom, our regret will have received the last additional circumstance of aggravation, and our despondency will be complete. Relying, however, on the wisdom and benignity of his majesty, we yet entertain a hope, that the nation will not be deprived of the salutary measures flowing from your councils and advice, and that the harmony and strength of Ireland will be founded on the solid basis of Catholic emancipation, and the reform of those grievances, which have inflamed public indignation.

“We therefore intreat you to persevere in exerting the full energy of your splendid talents for the attainment of those objects, which the present alarming posture of affairs and the consenting wishes of the nation so loudly demand.

THOMAS MOOR, Chairman.

W. H. ELLIS, Secretary.

MR. GRATTAN’S Answer.

“Ingenuous young Men, For this effusion of the heart, I owe you more than ordinary gratitude, and am proud to sympathize in your native, honest, and unadulterated impressions. I receive your address as the offering of the young year, better garland than the artificial honors of a court: it is the work of disinterested hands, and the present of uncontaminated hearts. May that ardour, which glows in your breasts long exist, and may the sentiments which you breathe long prevail; they are founded in principle, enlightened by letters, and supported by spirit.

“The subjects which you mention and recommend I feel and shall pursue.

“I lament the recalc of a patriot viceroy. Assisted by men much abler than myself, the reform of that system you condemn, I shall not fail to attempt. Bound as I now am to the rising as well as the passing age, and happy as I shall be, to go on in the service of both.

“I join in your fullest wishes for the Catholics, and I feel the important service, which you now render them, by marking in their favor the sentiments of the rising generation, doing, at the same time, so much honor to yourselves, when you give, I had almost said, your first vote in favor of your country.

“I am bound to your university by every tie of affection and duty. The sentiments of your address give me a new and just opportunity of saying to her, through you, “*Eſto Perpetua*,” thou seat of science and mother of virtue.

“I am, with the sincerest regard,

“Your most humble servant,

“HENRY GRATTAN.”

had left his majority in the Irish parliament completely broken in. On the other hand, the great majority of the Irish people sympathized with their sentiments, and confidently congratulated each other at the wonderful progress of liberality and freedom, in defiance of a determined system of coercion and oppression. The height of the political fever of that period gave rise to a most unjustifiable distinction of the nation into two separate classes only. One party, that considered every difference from them as tending and intended to bury the constitution under the ravages of a wild democracy: the other, that represented their opponents as a junto of monopolizers sworn to rivet eternally the chain of bondage and oppression upon their degraded country.

On the 13th of April, 1795, Lord Cole, after a short preface, moved a congratulatory address to his excellency the lord lieutenant on his arrival to take on him the government of the kingdom.

The Hon. Mr. Stewart seconded the address, professing, that throughout the whole of the session his conduct had been directed by two motives; the one to support his majesty in a war the most just and necessary, in which that country was ever engaged, and the other to give to the executive government of the country the firmest and best support. The appointment of his excellency, he thought likely to promote both those ends, and on that account, as well as from a knowledge of his lordship's private character, he was induced to second the address.

Mr. Grattan said, he would not then enter into a debate on that question, because the gentleman in his excellency's confidence had not yet a seat in the house, but for the present, he should content himself with giving a single negative to the motion, not from any disinclination for his excellency's person, having rather a respect for him, in consequence of the exalted character of his father, but because he felt himself much more strongly inclined to condole with the country on the recal of Lord Fitzwilliam, than to congratulate it on the appointment of Lord Camden.

The question to the address was put, and carried; after which, the house adjourned to the 21st; on which day, the attorney general informed the house, that their address to his excellency had been presented, for which he thanked them, and "trusted, that by a constant attention to the interests
" of Ireland, and by a determination that his conduct should invariably be
" directed to promote its welfare and happiness, he should not disappoint the
" favorable

“ favorable expectations entertained of his administration by the House of Commons.”

On the same day Mr. Forbes presented the treasury bill: and a petition was presented from all the freeholders of the county of Tipperary, in favor of their Roman Catholic brethren's pretensions to complete emancipation. Lord Boyle moved an address of congratulation to his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales on his late marriage.

*Mr. Grattan, previous to the motion he was about to make, observed, that it had been asserted, that in the conduct of the ministers of the crown towards that country, no blame could attach to the minister of Great Britain, or to any of his colleagues. He did not pretend to ascertain the real causes of the recall of the late chief governor, but was informed, that two causes were alleged; as to the removal of certain great officers, he observed, that such removal was matter of stipulation on one side, and engagement on the other. He spoke of nothing of what he was confidentially informed, but asserted what he knew was generally known, and repeatedly communicated; he said, that the leading member of the coalition declared, ‘ he accepted office principally with a view to reform the abuses in the government of Ireland; ‘ that the system of that government was execrable, so execrable as to ‘ threaten not only Ireland with the greatest misfortune, but ultimately the ‘ empire; that his grace would have gone in person if he had not found a ‘ second self in Lord Fitzwilliam, his nearest and dearest friend, whom he ‘ persuaded to accept the Irish government, and to whom he committed the ‘ important office of reforming the manifold abuses in that government.’ That he had obtained, with regard to that country, extraordinary power; the information of that extraordinary power, he communicated to his Irish friend; he consulted members of the Irish opposition touching his arrangements of men and measures, and ardently espoused, as an essential arrangement, those principal removals, which were supposed to have occasioned the recall of the deputy; an explanation and limitation of his powers did indeed afterwards take place, but no such limitation or explanation as to defeat either the stipulated measures or the stipulated removals, one only excepted, which never took place. Another question now arose, whether that quarter of the cabinet could without blame recall the viceroy for carrying into execution those specific engagements; whether they could without blame recall their minister of

* 15 Parl. Deb. p. 165.

reform, for removing, according to stipulation, some of the supposed ministers of abuse; and to continue the ministers of abuse in the place of the ministers of reformation. He therefore concluded, that if the Irish removals were a ground for the viceroy's recal, blame did attach at least to one quarter of the British cabinet.

The second alleged cause was, the Catholic bill. Upon this the principles and declarations of that quarter were decided; the Catholic emancipation was not only the concession of that quarter of the cabinet, but its precise engagement. His friends repeatedly declared they never would support any government, that should resist that bill, and it was agreed by that quarter with concurrence; and he was informed from persons in whom he could not but confide, of another; that the instruction was, if the Catholics insisted to carry forward their bill, that the government should give it a handsome support. Before he concluded his speech, he thus summed up the acts of Earl Fitzwilliam's administration: it had paid attention to the poverty of the people, by plans for relieving the poor from hearth-money, and paid attention to their morals, by a plan increasing the duty on spirits; had paid attention to their health, by proposing to take off the duties on beer and ale; that a plan for education had been intended; that a more equal trade between the two countries had not escaped their attention; that an odious and expensive institution that obtained under colour of protecting the city by a bad police, was abandoned by that government, and a bill prepared for correcting the same; that a responsibility bill had been introduced, and a bill to account for the public money by new checks, and in a constitutional manner, had been introduced by the persons connected with that government; that it was in contemplation to submit for consideration some further regulation for the better accounting for the public money, and for the better collection of the revenue; that those occupations were accompanied by great exertions for the empire; so that administration established the comparability of the services, domestic and imperial, and made a good system of domestic government the foundation of unanimity in support of the empire; that in consequence of such a conduct, a war not very fortunate, had ceased to be unpopular, and levies of an extraordinary proportion were not a ground of complaint. In the midst of all this, the British cabinet dissolved the government, and professed to dissolve it for the preservation of the empire. They converted a nation of support into a nation of remonstrance, and unanimity in favor of government to unanimity against her.

He then moved for a committee to enquire into the state of the nation.

Mr. Cuffe, Colonel Stewart, and several other ministerial members, strongly opposed the motion, without pretending to disclose the *arcana imperii*; they peremptorily insisted, that Earl Fitzwilliam had contravened or neglected his instructions; in evidence of which they remarked, that neither the Duke of Portland, nor any other member of the coalition, not even his friends, his dearest friends, Lord Spencer or Mr. Wyndham, had resented his recal or abandoned their connexion with Mr. Pitt. In the debate it was observed by Mr. Ponsonby, that whilst Lord Fitzwilliam was at the head of affairs, several gentlemen on the other side of the house were blind to all those imperfections and defects in the late chief governor, which then stared them in the face with such gigantic magnitude: they were then as forward to express their confidence in his deserts, as they were now to declare him undeserving of any thanks or confidence. An avowal was made in observation by Mr. Pelham, which was sharply animadverted upon by Mr. Grattan. It was not in fact very flattering to the dignity or consequence of the Irish parliament. Mr. secretary believed all the sober part of the world, and all men conversant in public matters, would think he best discharged his duty, by not being betrayed into any indiscretion either by the attack of his adversaries, or by the zeal of his friends. A right honorable gentleman (Sir J. Blacquiere) had rightly stated, that the lord lieutenant and his secretary acted under written instructions from the cabinet; and that such instructions alone were the proper authority of their conduct: it was not, however, necessary at any time to discover those instructions; they were to be judged of by the goodness of the measures, which were produced to that house and the public.

Mr. Grattan replied, that certain doctrines had been advanced on the subject of the British cabinet, to which he could not accede; that it had been argued, that the British cabinet was to govern the executive power of Ireland, that the viceroy's function was only to obey orders, and to be the English agent in the kingdom of Ireland; that such a doctrine was fatal to monarchy in that country; that in its place it established the monarchy of clerks, a government to be carried on by post and under the dominion of spies, who were less than gentlemen, and more than ministers. It was such a base and dishonorable system, that had excited the indignation of some of the Whigs in England, the Duke of Portland in particular. It was that system of national degradation and vice-regal extinction, that system in which the clerks dominated
and

and their betters obeyed, that had sunk a former administration, and had excited the scorn and indignation of the country. To the returning prevalence of such a system he attributed in a great degree the recall of the late chief governor. The cabinet were misinformed; they heard appeals against him from the persons removed, and tried unsummoned on the testimony of partial witnesses, the representative of the king. They did this contrary to the confidence, which essentially belonged to his office, and contrary to a principle indispensable to government. It was a matter of melancholy reflection to consider how little that cabinet knew any thing relating to Ireland. Ireland was a subject it considered with a lazy contumely, and picked up here and there, by accident or design, interested and erroneous intelligence. He was well aware how much on a late occasion the friends of the last administration were grossly misrepresented to that cabinet, and how the disposition and temper of the people in general were mis-stated and traduced, and how deaf the ears of that cabinet were to the representation of the viceroy, while open to the tales of the interested and discontented. They had been alluded to as persons to whom blame attached; they desired to be questioned, and they defied their adversaries; they desired it might be remembered, that they were ready to encounter the charge, and that those who made the charge declined the combat. It had been said, that the reform of abuses in Ireland formed no part of the ground of the coalition; he did not pretend to say what had formed that ground, but he did say, that one quarter of the cabinet did assert, that a principal inducement to their acceptance of office was a reform in the abuses of the Irish government; that it conceived the system to have been pernicious to Ireland, and highly prejudicial to the empire. He said only that one great motive to the acceptance of office was stated to be very extensive powers in Ireland; that the arrangement for which the late lord lieutenant was said to be dismissed, was by that quarter engaged in, and that the Catholic question received decided approbation, and if pressed on by the Catholics, the instruction was to give it decided support. He therefore persisted to respect, but marvelled much at that quarter; he acknowledged he was astonished. The house would see how very natural that proceeding was; a party connected with certain men in Ireland came into power; they wished to advance the persons of their friends, which could not be done without adopting their principles; from the habits of communication those principles and ideas regarding Ireland were common to both; the
Irish

Irish connection had their English friends as averse from the abuses of government as themselves, and ready of course to adopt arrangement of measures; they possessed or imagined they possessed great powers regarding Ireland, and stipulated to exercise those powers in favor of the measure of their connection, who were pledged to a specific catalogue of measures. On the division, the numbers were for the motion 48, against it 158.

Whilst the Catholic college bill was pending before the house, Mr. Grattan presented a petition from the Roman Catholics of Ireland against two provisions contained in that bill: the first was that, by which seven of the trustees were enabled to appoint a president, masters, fellows, professors, and scholars, who they prayed might be elected after public examination and under oath in the manner practised in Trinity College, Dublin: the other was that, by which no Protestant or child of a Protestant father should be permitted to receive education in the college. This exclusion they considered as tending to prevent that harmony, union, and friendly intercourse through life, which might be thus early cemented between the youth of different religious persuasions; the happy effects of which had been felt by the permission granted of having the Catholic youth educated in the university of Dublin.*

The 4th of May, 1795, brought on the important debate on the second reading of the Roman Catholic bill. It was opened by the solicitor general, probably upon the grounds, which it had been preconcerted, it was to be rejected by government. He made a long exordium, and went into an historical detail of oaths and tests. He called upon their attention to the most important subject, that was ever agitated in that country, a subject resolving itself into one single question, "Whether they would leave a trace of that constitution established by what he would ever call the glorious Revolution?" What was the bold and prominent feature of that bill? It professed to give every Roman Catholic permission to sit in either house of parliament, and amounted to a dispensation from taking any of those oaths, or subscribing to that declaration, which they would find embodied in the bill of rights at the time of the sacred compact between King William and his parliament of Great Britain, which was soon afterwards recognized as extending the blessings of that glorious revolution to Ireland, had been acted upon ever since,

* 15 P. D. p. 201. The act passed however with both these clauses in it. It is intitled, "An Act for the better Education of Persons professing the Popish or Roman Catholic Religion." 35 Geo. III. c. 21.

and recognized by several statutes; by one so lately as the year 1782, when they then enacted the same oaths, was dignified by the name of that great man, and excellent lawyer, Lord Chief Baron Yelverton, and which passed under his auspices in the memorable æra of the Duke of Portland's administration.

He wished to put this question on a ground which had nothing to do with the principles on which the claims of the Roman Catholics had been hitherto decided. From the first relaxation in 1778, the history of that house had been a history of benevolence, kindness, good will, and affection from parliament to the Roman Catholics: but in that period, there appeared no trace of infringement upon the great boundaries of the constitution; and he relied on the wisdom of that house, not to intrench on these land-marks, which equally demarked the constitution of Great Britain and Ireland. He knew it had been industriously asserted, that the Roman Catholics were in a humiliating and degraded situation; he knew that factious and seditious men made use of that untrue and unfounded assertion to destroy the good order of the country; and he felt it necessary to undeceive the Roman Catholics, as far as he was able, to bring them back to a sense and knowledge of the blessings of law, and the comforts of tranquillity. In 1778, property in chattle interests was conceded to them; in 1782, the inheritance of the land was opened to them; and down to 1793, scarcely a session passed without recognizing the same principles of kindness towards them; and at that day, they were under no more restraint as to property than Protestants were. The act of 1793, emanating from the crown, and passed under the auspices of a minister of as great consideration and worth as ever sat in the house, was not accordant with the sentiments of some of the most illustrious characters of the country; that act was declared to be an act of conciliation, it was declared from high authority to be intended as such, and from that period it was hoped that the question would be at rest, and the country in tranquillity. At that time certain gentlemen sought to extend the bill to the length of the present one; but the wisdom of parliament rejected the proposal by a great majority. Had any great circumstance occurred since to justify this important alteration in the legislative system? There were not in Ireland fifty Roman Catholic gentlemen who would seek to sit in parliament, or who had the remotest appetite for the bustle of public life: it was not by men like these, that the clamor was raised; they were too loyal, too decorous, too well

well affected to the constitution to raise such an outcry as had produced outrage in the remotest corners of Ireland, or to inflame the peasantry, who assembled in thousands, because of the mountebank abuse of the word emancipation, which they had accepted as a signal for commotion, and which they were taught to think meant the lowering the price of land. This subject had not originated with the opulent or respectable Roman Catholics, but with factious bodies of men, who under the cloak of sanctity and a zealous affectation in the cause of God, had no scruple to convulse their country, and send the constitution to destruction. He moved that the bill should be rejected.

The motion was seconded by Lord Kingsborough, who spoke very warmly against the bill: he aggravated the reports of the debate in Francis Street chapel, and laid the whole ferment of the country to those incendiaries, the committee men, and the United Irishmen. Sir Hercules Langrishe in an eloquent and instructive speech supported the bill. He well knew, that some men more devoted to turbulence than toleration, had by a suspicious connection, affected to make common cause with the Roman Catholics, in order to apply the authority of their numbers, and the justness of their cause to their own dangerous projects. Almost every gentleman, who had before spoken in parliament, entered largely into the debate. Mr. Pelham spoke very fully against the bill. Mr. Arthur O'Connor made one of the most brilliant speeches ever heard in the Irish parliament in support of it.* Colonel Stewart urged, that if the bill should pass, the king would be obliged to come forward and demand a repeal of the coronation oath. This infringement of the coronation oath was also insisted upon by some other opposers of the bill, and formed the chief novelty of argument† in the debate: every prejudice, abuse, or calumny, that had ever been launched against Popery in the most acrimonious days of religious bigotry were now again brought forward to shew the unfitness of Catholic subjects to be admitted to the participation of the rights and liberties of the constitution. The mildest reason alleged for their exclu-

* This speech first raised him into note: he was brought into parliament by his uncle, Lord Longueville, who was a supporter of administration: he was so offended with the speech of his nephew, that the next morning he sent for him, and desired him to resign his seat, which accordingly he did.

† The most irrefragable confutation of it is to be found in Mr. Burke's letter to Sir Hercules Langrishe; and it seems that the honorable baronet availed himself of several of his correspondent's arguments in his speech in this debate.

sion was their superiority in number. The supporters of the bill on the other side were not generally backward in branding the opposers of it with illiberality, prejudice, and blindness. Both sides were heated, and more than usually bitter in their *retorts upon each other: although it were

* As the incompatibility of Catholic emancipation with the coronation oath was now for the first time made a subject of parliamentary discussion, it must be interesting to every one to know how Mr. Grattan, who never left any part of his subject unsifted, treated the matter. 15 P. D. p. 333.

“ But I find that Catholic emancipation is held incompatible with our monarchy. What! his majesty, the head of a Catholic league, the King of Corsica, the Lord of Canada, the great ally of the emperor, the grand confederate of the King of Spain, the protector of the pope; the King of England, whose armies are Catholic, whose European connections are Catholic, are his Irish subjects the only Catholics in whom he won’t confide? Has he found religion make the emperor false, or the Prussian faithful? Such were not the sentiments of the speeches from the throne in 1793 and 1795, when his majesty called on all his subjects to defend their religion and their constitution. What religion? A religion of disabilities. What constitution? A constitution of exclusion. Am I to understand that his majesty called forth his Catholic subjects to fight for a constitution, which was to be shut against them, and for a religion which was dangerous to the king, and penal to the Catholic. No, it was not the pope, nor yet the pretender, it was Paine, it was the French republic, against which you called for the zeal of your people, and held out the blessings of the constitution. But now it seems it is the antichrist against whom you place your batteries, the virgin, and the real presence: and in that strain of grave and solemn raving, a right honorable gentleman proposes to take up arms against the grave of Popery, which is shut, and to precipitate into the gulph of republicanism, which is open; perfectly safe for the king, he and those who join him think it to affront the Catholic subjects, by gross suspicions; others have proceeded to the grossest invectives; perfectly safe, they think it, to banish them from all places at court and seats in parliament; to tell Catholic virtue, Catholic talents, Catholic ambition, you must not serve the king, you may have property influence, but you must not act in constituted assemblies, nor in any rank or distinction for the crown. Perfectly safe they think it to establish an incompatibility between Popery and allegiance. Perfectly safe they think to insult the throne, and reduce the king of Ireland, like the pope, to Protestant guards instead of a people; and then, it is proposed, that those Protestant guards should monopolize all the powers of government, and privileges of the constitution, as a reward for their disinterestedness. In support of such policy, it has been advanced, in a very idle publication, that Roman Catholics, as long as they have the feeling of men, must resist the natural propensities of the human heart, if they do not endeavour to subvert a Protestant king; but I pass that over with the scorn it deserves. It has been also said, that his majesty’s oath is a bar. Oaths are serious things. To make them political pretences is a high crime; to make an obligation, taken for the assurance of liberty, a covenant against it; to impose on conscience a breach of a duty, to make the piety of the king the scourge of his people, is an attempt atrocious in the extreme. Examine the argument, and you find the oath was taken three years before the exclusion of the Irish Catholics; the oath is the first of

“ William,

were made a government question, some of their usual (more independent) supporters, left them on this occasion, and at the half past ten o'clock of the morning on the 5th of May, the house divided, 155 for rejecting the bill and 84 against it. Thus was an end put to the fond and confident expectation,

“ William, the tests that exclude them the third; so that his majesty must have sworn in the strain
 “ and spirit of prophecy. Examine a little further, and you will find his majesty swears, not in
 “ his legislative but in his executive capacity, he swears to the laws he is to execute, not against the
 “ laws which parliament may think proper to make. In that supposition he would, by his oath,
 “ control not himself but parliament, and swear not to execute laws but to prevent them. Examine
 “ a little further, and you will find the words of the oath cannot support the interpretation:

“ ‘ I will support the true profession of the gospel, and the Protestant religion as by law estab-
 “ lished.’ This is the oath. I will perpetuate civil incapacities on Catholics, this is the comment.
 “ Such comment supposes the true profession of the gospel to stand on pains and penalties, and the
 “ Protestant religion on civil proscription. Examine the oath a little further; and, if the comment
 “ be true, the oath has been broken, by his majesty’s gracious recommendation in favor of the Ca-
 “ tholics in 1793, broken by the grant of the elective franchise, broken by the Canada bill, broken
 “ by the Corsican constitution. Hear the speech of the viceroy of Corsica; his excellency having
 “ recommended to parliament the civil and military establishment, proceeds at last to the church,
 “ and advises them to settle that establishment with his holiness the pope. Very proper all this no
 “ doubt; but if the interpretation were true, what an outrageous breach all this of his majesty’s
 “ coronation oath. I should ask, whether in the interpretation of the oath, his majesty has con-
 “ sulted his Irish bishops? And yet he could have found among them men perfectly competent. I
 “ will venture to say, that the head of our clergy understands the Catholic question better than those
 “ consulted; I will add, he does not, I believe, disapprove of their emancipation, nor approve of the
 “ argument against them. But it seems, in matters that relate to the Irish church, the Irish clergy
 “ are not to be consulted; an English episcopacy, like an English cabinet, is to determine the destiny
 “ of Ireland. I have great respect for the learned prelates of England, particularly for one, whose
 “ exemplary virtue and apostolic character, qualify him to preside over whatever is learned, pure, or
 “ holy; but in Irish affairs, in matters in which our civil as well as our religious interests are im-
 “ plicated, might I say, his majesty’s counsellors should be his Irish parliament and his Irish bi-
 “ shops. It seems highly prejudicial to the church and the monarchy, that the argument which
 “ excludes the Catholic under pretence to strengthen both, should be attended with circumstances
 “ that bespeak the Irish hierarchy a cypher, the English hierarchy a nuisance, and represents the
 “ king a magistrate as sworn against the privileges of his people. So far am I from agreeing to
 “ such an argument, that I must here repeat what I advanced before, and say, that I do not dissent,
 “ but I contradict. I do not say the Catholic emancipation is compatible with the present monar-
 “ chical government in Ireland, but that it is now become necessary to it, and that as for the pre-
 “ servation of the connection, you must make it compatible with the privileges of three fourths of
 “ your people, so, for the preservation of your monarchy, you make monarchy also compatible with
 “ those privileges, you must make the regal capacity of the king compatible with the civil capacity
 “ of the subject.”

with which the great bulk of the Irish nation had been encouraged to look to their complete emancipation.

The ready adoption and support, which the majority in parliament had in the first days of Lord Fitzwilliam's administration, given to his proposed system of measures, and their unsteadiness and instant tergiversation upon the change of men filled the people of Ireland with mistrust and jealousies, that have never completely subsided to the present hour. They looked up no longer with any degree of confidence to the persons, who were ready to barter their rights and interests to every set of men, that could reward their ductility and subservience. This ignominious adaptation of principle to the most palpable contradictions was, in fact, little calculated to command the respect and affection of a nation now emphatically devoted to the attainment of constitutional freedom. Without attributing any peculiar sagacity to the mass of the community, there were two reasons (and every one now reasoned in Ireland) completely within their competency. Extravagancy and violence were pushed to such excess, that grave senators did not scruple to assert, that the peasantry was so brutal, as to mean and understand by Catholic emancipation, a total liberation from taxes and rent, and an agrarian division of property. The meanest labourer could and did understand that by emancipation the Catholic lord, esquire, merchant, mechanic or labourer, was to be put upon an exact level with the Protestant in those same degrees: and the versatility of the same men voting for and against the measure within the space of a month, was obviously to be traced to the true source by the most illiterate.*

Sir

* Some questions said in the before quoted memoir to have been put to Mr. Arthur O'Connor in his examination before the secret committee of the House of Commons on the 16th of August, 1798, and his answers to them, seem to throw a strong light upon this subject. (p. 55.)

“ *Committee.* Why, what opinion have the lower classes of the people of political subjects?

“ *O'Connor.* The lowest societies of the union conversed freely of the corruption, the usurpation, and the venality of parliament. While I was a member of the House of Commons, you know the frequent conversation amongst the members was, how much has such an one given for his seat? From whom did he purchase? Has not such an one sold his borough? Has not such a lord bought it? Has not such a peer so many members in this house? Was not such a member with the lord lieutenant's secretary, to insist on some greater place or pension? Did not the secretary refuse it? Has he not gone into the opposition? These, and such like facts, are as well known to the lowest classes of the union as to yourselves.

“ *A Member*

Sir Lawrence Parsons on the 13th of May, moved a resolution, of which he had long given notice, which was debated with more personal acrimony than any question throughout the session. The resolution was,* “ that John Earl of Westmorland, by authorizing such a number of regular troops to be sent out of this country, as left the remainder considerably less than the number appointed by law for the defence thereof, had been guilty of a violation of the compact entered into with the crown, and of dispensing with the law of the land.”

Mr. Conolly said, that if that motion had not been made by the honorable baronet, he should have felt himself called upon, as the mover of the augmentation in 1769, to make it. When he had made that motion, a member, whom very few that he addressed could remember, (Doctor Lucas) prophesied that those troops would be maintained and paid by the country during peace, and never suffered to remain there in time of war. The honorable baronet had been properly restrained last session from making the motion, by the state of the country, but now between militia and army they were able to meet any enemy.

Mr. Grattan observed, that the question was not whether Lord Westmorland had dispensed with acts of parliament, but being by papers on their table convicted of having exercised a dispensing power, the question was, whether the house should proceed to impeach him. It was however met by the question for adjournment, which after midnight was carried by a majority of 83 against 23. The only question of notice that occurred during the remainder of the session, was Mr. Curran's motion for an address to the crown, seconded by Mr. Grattan: this was also defeated by the question of adjournment with-

“ *A Member of the Committee.* Mr. O'Connor is perfectly right; I have heard the lowest classes of the people talk in that style.

“ *O'Connor.* The people are conscious you are self constituted, and not their delegates; men who have no other object in view but to advance your own individual interest.

“ *A Member of the Committee.* That we are a parcel of placemen and pensioners?

“ *O'Connor.* Exactly so.

“ *Committee.* What is the object the people have in view at present?

“ *O'Connor.* I believe they have laid by for the instant all idea of speculative politics, and think only how they shall annihilate the insupportable usurpation and cruelty of the British and Irish government, and how they shall best avenge the blood which has been shed, and the tortures which have been inflicted, to support a government they detest.”

* 15 Parliamentary Debates, p. 370.

out a debate. Mr. Curran prefaced the motion by a very eloquent and impressive speech upon the existing circumstances of the country. The chancellor of the exchequer gave for reason in moving the adjournment, that the time was improper, and the charges in the address were so various and multifarious, that it was impossible to debate them all together. The address was intended as a recorded publication of the sentiments, and justification to posterity, of the conduct of the gentlemen of the opposition during that session of parliament. The motion was,

“ *That an humble address be presented to his majesty, to assure his majesty of our attachment to his person and family, of our inviolable regard for the monarchical form of government, and of our determination to support the connection with Great Britain for ever.

“ That we humbly presume to hope we have, on all occasions, manifested those sentiments abundantly;

“ That we are the more inclined to do so, from a conscious sense of the value of Ireland in the present critical situation of the empire;

“ That, in consequence of the part taken by Great Britain, under the advice of his majesty's ministers, Ireland is involved in the present most eventful war;

“ That in consequence of this war, we have greatly added to our annual taxes, and increased, near three-fold the debt of the nation;

“ That we have also assisted the army and navy of the empire with vast numbers of our people, who have in different quarters of the globe asserted, that his majesty must ever command the courage and loyalty of their country;

“ That in this year we continued to increase the annual taxes, voted a loan of near two millions, granted a greater force than ever was paid by Ireland, and made these unexampled exertions with the unanimity of the parliament and the approbation of the people.

“ That we were the more induced to this, from a zeal for his majesty's service, and an attachment to Great Britain, but accompanied with an expectation that our extraordinary grants would be justified to our constituents by a reform, under a patriot viceroy, of the various and manifold abuses that had taken place in the administration of the Irish government, a re-

* 15 Parliamentary Debates, p. 396.

“ formation

“ formation which we conceived, in the present times, and under such an
“ increase of debt and taxes, indispensable, and which we do, therefore, most
“ humbly persist to implore and expect;

“ That after the supply was granted, and the force voted, and whilst the
“ chief governor, possessing the entire confidence of both houses of parlia-
“ ment, and the approbation of all the people, was reforming abuses, and
“ putting the country in a state of defence, he was suddenly and prematurely
“ recalled, and our unparalleled efforts for the support of his majesty, an-
“ swered by the strongest marks of the resentment of his ministers;

“ That in consequence of such a proceeding, the business of government
“ was interrupted, the defence of the country suspended, the unanimity
“ which had under the then lord lieutenant existed, converted into just com-
“ plaint and remonstrance, and the energy, confidence, and zeal of the na-
“ tion, so loudly called for by his majesty's ministers, were, by the conduct of
“ those very ministers themselves, materially affected;

“ That these, their late proceedings, aggravated their past system; in com-
“ plaining of which we particularly refer to the notorious traffic of honors, to
“ the removal of the troops, contrary to law, and in total disregard of the
“ solemn compact with the nation, and safety of the realm, to the criminal
“ conduct of government respecting the Irish army, to the disbursement of
“ sums of money without account or authority, to the improvident grant of
“ reversions at the expence of his majesty's interest, sacrificed for the emolu-
“ ment of his servants to the conduct of his majesty's ministers in both coun-
“ tries, towards his Catholic and Protestant subjects of Ireland, alternately
“ practising on their passions, exciting their hope and procuring their disap-
“ pointment;

“ That convinced by the benefits which we have received under his ma-
“ jesty's reign, that the grievances of which we complain are as unknown to
“ his majesty as abhorrent from his paternal and royal disposition;

“ We, his commons of Ireland, beg leave to lay ourselves at his feet, and,
“ with all humility to his majesty, to prefer, on our part, and on the part of
“ our constituents, this our just and necessary remonstrance against the con-
“ duct of his ministers; and to implore his majesty, that he may be graci-
“ ously pleased to lay his commands upon his minister to second the zeal of
“ his Irish parliament in his majesty's services, by manifesting in future, to
“ the people of Ireland, due regard and attention.”

On

On the 5th of June, 1795, the parliament was prorogued with the usual formalities. The lord-lieutenant's speech from the throne expressed his majesty's acknowledgments for the very liberal supplies, and commended the benevolent relief of the poor from the tax of hearth-money; the wise foundation of a college for the education of the Catholic clergy; and the satisfactory arrangement of issuing money from the treasury.

Upon Lord Fitzwilliam's arrival in England, the misunderstanding between him and the ministry upon the subject of his instructions, became very serious: and in the result, he was not only condemned by Mr. Pitt, and that part of the cabinet, which consisted of the old administration, but was wholly abandoned by those, whom he had reason to call his own friends, the Duke of Portland, Earl Mansfield, Earl Spencer, and Mr. Wyndham. The charge made by the noble lord, who insisted that he followed his instructions in every measure which he had proposed in Ireland, was met by the plea of official secrecy, which equally bound the cabinet, who gave, as the viceroy, who received the instructions. A majority in the cabinet had carried the question of his recall; and, in fact, no one could be more implicated in their common act than the other. On the 8th day of May, 1795, the Duke of Norfolk, after having enlarged upon the impolicy, danger, and injustice of recalling Earl Fitzwilliam under the existing circumstances, and having offered to the house a most just and candid representation of the state of Ireland, concluded with the following motion:—"That an humble address be presented to his majesty, that he will be graciously pleased to direct, that there be laid before this house, such part of the correspondence between his majesty's ministers and Earl Fitzwilliam, late lord-lieutenant of Ireland, as related to the motives and grounds of his recall from the government of the said kingdom, during a session of parliament, in which the two houses of parliament had voted their confidence in him, and their approbation of his conduct, and with a munificence unexampled, had granted supplies for the general exigencies of the state."*

The Earls of Mansfield, Coventry, and Carnarvon, and Lord Sydney, opposed the Duke's motion. Lord Fitzwilliam's character not having suffered by his removal, they maintained that no inquiry was needed to clear it up. The prerogative of the crown empowered it to dismiss ministers at discretion: it were unconstitutional to institute enquiries into the reasons for such dismissions;

* Parl. Debates, p. 468.

sions; and parliamentary discussions were the more improper, as they might disclose matters that ought never to have been divulged. The dismissal of Lord Fitzwilliam proved no more than a difference of opinion on his part, touching the affairs of Ireland, that made it improper he should any longer act with ministers who were of another: neither was there sufficient evidence of the discontents in Ireland, to require any particular investigation.

The Earl of Westmorland decidedly condemned the introduction into the Irish parliament, of the business relating to the Catholics, which he asserted was contrary to the instructions carried from England: their emancipation, he maintained, was repugnant to sound policy, as well as to the king's oath, and the laws of the land.

To this Lord Fitzwilliam replied, that the most necessary policy had called upon him to act as he had done. Ireland was in a state of imminent danger from internal feuds and external foes: the Catholics were equally powerful and dissatisfied: the French were become masters of Holland; and thirty-six hostile sail of the line were hovering on the western coast of Ireland. In this perilous situation he had the happiness to unite all parties in a determination to act vigorously for the defence of the kingdom. But could he have effected this, had he not convinced the Irish of the liberal intentions of this country?

He was answered by Lord Grenville, who, after alleging the very same reasons against an enquiry as had been adduced, remarked, that were parliament to assume the right of enquiring into the motives for the dismissal of ministers, they might, by the same rule, proceed next to the examination, whether those who were appointed to succeed them, had been properly chosen. This would obviously lead to still more dangerous enquiries, tending ultimately to unhinge the constitution.

After many warm arguments on both sides of the question, the motion for an enquiry was rejected by one hundred against twenty-five.

In the House of Commons very spirited debates also took place on this subject. Mr. Jekyll proposed the same motion that had been in the House of Lords, and supported it by similar arguments. It was stated in reply by Mr. Pitt, that no communication of the correspondence between Lord Fitzwilliam and the ministry could be permitted without the king's assent; and ministers were officially bounden to the strictest secrecy in all cases of this nature. He would not for that reason, enter into any verbal explanations of the business in question, and neither should admit nor deny the facts or the inferences

alleged. The king had clearly the right to nominate and to dismiss ministers without assigning his motives, cases of an extraordinary nature excepted. He forcibly urged the indispensable necessity of an entire agreement in sentiments between the king's ministry, without which it were impracticable to conduct the affairs of the nation with any regularity or success; and yet they might differ without any diminution of reciprocal friendship or esteem. He deprecated the discussion of subjects now before the Irish parliament, as a manifest violation of its independence; and warmly exhorted the house to leave the settlement of affairs in that nation to its representatives, who certainly were best qualified for that purpose. Mr. Pitt was seconded by other members. Messrs. Fox and Grey spoke very warmly for the enquiry. Mr. Fox compared the dismissal of Earl Fitzwilliam with the resignation and dismissal of Lord Carlisle, Lord Temple, Lord Northington, and others; and pointed out the difference between this and all of them. In the cases of all those noble persons, the dismissals and resignations arose in consequence of the change of administration, and therefore they differed entirely from the present case. Some persons might perhaps object to this motion, as the very words of it conveyed an idea, that it was dangerous to suffer any enquiry whatever to take place, as it stated circumstances, which went to infer that Ireland was in danger. The conduct of Earl Fitzwilliam was certainly very dangerous. But to whom was it dangerous: to the people of Ireland? By no means. It was dangerous only to the few individuals whose plan it was to govern Ireland by corruption: it was dangerous to those who held the interest and the sentiments of the people of that country in contempt; and therefore the cause of the removal of the noble earl upon that principle was easily perceived. The noble earl was, he believed, the only person who had the good fortune to obtain the applauses of all the Catholics and dissenters of Ireland; the only person who, since the accession of the house of Brunswick, had been able to unite all parties in that kingdom; and that circumstance, perhaps, to his majesty's present advisers, was a sufficient reason for his recall. Here Mr. Fox entered into a short history of facts with regard to the administration of Earl Fitzwilliam in Ireland; as also of the applications which were made to the throne by delegates from that country on behalf of the Catholics, and maintained the right which the House of Commons of this country had to institute enquiries into public matters which related to the interests of both. He was of opinion, that what had been allowed to the Catholics in that country and in this, so far as it

it went, was highly proper: but that while there was any distinction made between them and the Protestants with regard to political rights, they would still continue to have claims upon the justice of the legislature. His opinion, indeed, was well known to those who had done him the honor to attend to him: it was, that at all times, in all countries, and upon all occasions, there should be no distinctions in political rights, on account of religious opinions. He thought that the prejudices of the people were, generally speaking, worthy of attention. But when prejudices bent against the general principles of toleration, he did not think them entitled to much respect. What was the case in Ireland when Lord Fitzwilliam became lord-lieutenant? When he arrived in Ireland, he found the Protestants so far from having any alarm at the idea of the emancipation of the Catholics, that they all wished for it: even when his recall was known to be about to take place, there was only one place in the whole kingdom where alarm was affected to be felt, in consequence of the plan proposed in favor of the Catholics; and even there the vote upon that occasion was carried by a small majority, and therefore it was demonstrable, that the almost unanimous wish of the people of Ireland, was for the entire emancipation of the Catholics.

An end was put to the most warm and interesting debate during the session, by Mr. Pitt moving for the order of the day, which was carried by 180 against 49.

The spirit of Defenderism increased and spread very widely in this year, through the kingdom; and many even in Dublin were found to have entered into this execrable band. To them were attributed the outrages committed upon some of the first officers* of the state, immediately after the arrival of
Lord

* The nature of these outrages appears from the proclamation published on the occasion.

“ By the Lord Lieutenant and Council of Ireland,

“ A PROCLAMATION.

“ CAMDEN.

“ WHEREAS on the thirty-first day of March last, after his excellency the
“ lord lieutenant had been sworn into office, before his Grace the Lord Archbishop of Armagh and
“ his excellency the lord chancellor, the lords justices, a great number of persons assembled in
“ and near his majesty's Castle of Dublin, did most daringly and illegally insult the said Archbi-
“ shop of Armagh and the said lord chancellor, as they were returning from the said Castle, by
“ throwing stones at their carriages, and did pursue the said lord chancellor from the said Castle of
“ Dublin, to his house in Ely-place, and did assault him several times by throwing paving stones of

Lord Camden in the metropolis. They also assailed the house of Mr. John Claudius Beresford. The characters of the chancellor, and of the whole house of Beresford, were particularly obnoxious to the people at this time. They had given a decided opposition to parliamentary reform and Catholic emancipation: Earl Fitzwilliam had wished to remove the chancellor, but was over-ruled by the British cabinet: he had actually removed Mr. Beresford from the revenue board, though he were afterwards restored by a more powerful mandate. They were prominently active in procuring the removal of Lord Fitzwilliam; and on that account also they were exposed to the full resentment of the mob.

In the provinces too the outrages of the defenders were increased and multiplied to such a degree, that in some counties gentlemen were forced to keep in

“ a very large size at him, by one of which the said lord chancellor was struck and wounded in his head.

“ And whereas various mobs assembled at the same time, in various parts of the city of Dublin, and did attack several houses therein.

“ Now we the lord lieutenant and council, being determined to bring to condign punishment, the persons guilty of offences of a tendency so dangerous to the public peace, and to the lives and properties of the inhabitants of this city, do by this our proclamation publish and declare, That if any person or persons shall within the space of six calendar months from the date hereof, discover any of the persons who committed any of the offences aforesaid, or who advised, encouraged, instigated, moved, stimulated, or incited the persons concerned in the said offences, or any of them, to commit the same, such person or persons so discovering shall receive as a reward the sum of five hundred pounds, for the person or persons who made the attack on the lord primate and lord chancellor, or either of them, and one hundred pounds for every of the first three persons who shall be apprehended and convicted of attacking the said houses or any of them.

“ And we do likewise publish and declare, that if any of the persons concerned in the said offences shall discover any other of the persons who committed any of the said offences, so that such person or persons, so discovered, shall be convicted thereof, such person or persons so discovering, shall, over and above said reward, receive his majesty's most gracious pardon for the said offences.

“ And we do hereby strictly charge and command the lord mayor of the city of Dublin, and all justices of the peace of said city of Dublin, and of the county of Dublin, and all sheriffs and other magistrates and officers within their several jurisdictions, and all other his majesty's loving subjects, that they use their utmost endeavours and diligence in suppressing all riots and unlawful assemblies, and in apprehending, and causing to be apprehended, all and every the persons concerned in the said audacious offences.

“ And we do hereby caution his majesty's loving and peaceable subjects, carefully to avoid all
“ unlawful

in their houses a constant military guard to preserve them and their families from depredation and murder. This was perhaps, the most awful and critical period of modern Irish history. From this time the very tint of moderation seems to have been effaced from every transaction that affected the public weal. There certainly were, at this time, many sub-divisions of the people into particular classes, who associated together for different purposes, most with laudable views, many with motives of conscious innocence, others with designs of a suspicious tendency, and some with intentions directly nefarious. But one grand division superseded all these sub-discriminations: the castle and the popular party. The general marshalling of individuals into these two great bodies, was effected with so much heat and acrimonious zeal, that tyranny and treason became the only medium through which they respectively viewed the conduct and actions of each other. To this preternatural tension of principle are to be reduced all the excesses of violence, which for some years afflicted that ill-fated country, till the powerful balm of incorporate union was applied to heal and prevent the evil. It is impossible so to analyze the sincerity of individuals, as to arraign their professed views and intentions. No man can so narrowly watch the workings of his neighbour's mind, as to ascertain the instant, at which justifiable conviction takes place: few can

“ unlawful assemblies, lest they should expose themselves to the consequences, necessarily resulting
 “ from the executing the duties of the magistrates in the preservation of the public peace.

“ Given at the council chamber in Dublin, the 1st day of April, 1795.

“ W. Armagh,	H. Meath,
“ Fitzgibbon, C.	G. L. Kildare,
“ R. Dublin,	Londonderry,
“ Cha. Cashel,	John Foster,
“ Wm. Tuam,	T. Pelham,
“ Clanricarde,	H. Cavendish,
“ Waterford,	J. Blaquiére,
“ Shannon,	Theo. Jones,
“ Louth,	Henry King,
“ Glandore,	Jos. Cooper,
“ Clonmell,	Wm. Conyngham,
“ Ely,	Robert Cuninghame,
“ Dillon,	James Cuff,
“ Pery,	Arthur Wolfe.
“ Gosford,	

“ God save the King.”

answer

answer even for their own. Allowing therefore, what every man claims for himself, full credit for sincerity in that, which he professes to do for the good of his country and the preservation of its constitution, we proceed to the detail of what was attempted and effected by the different parties under this great pervading maxim, that different measures adopted with the same motive may and generally do produce contrary effects.

The bulk of the nation unanimously looked up with confidence to the administration of Earl Fitzwilliam: all parties were united in support of it, and the civil union of different religions threatened immediate overthrow to whatever party existed in Ireland, that wished, promoted, or throve by the internal disunion of the people. For more than a century this disuniting principle had been the regular system and avowed language of the government in every speech from the throne. Protestant union of less than a million against the common enemy consisting of three millions, was encouraged and enforced: the private emoluments and advantages of that system were long felt and enjoyed, even after the public had ceased to avow it.

A power from this side of the water had replaced those persons, whom the people, at that time, looked upon as their greatest enemies in the plenitude of dominion. Irritated at the popular wish to displace them, they resumed their former situations with redoubled disposition to strong and severe measures, which their adversaries called arbitrary rule and oppression. Henceforward the popular societies began to settle into a system of mysterious secrecy, infinitely more dangerous than their former plan of confident and open boldness. This was the fatal effect of a change of measures. The secret committee of the lords explicitly said, that * “the attainment of what are called parliamentary reform and Catholic emancipation were and continued to be held out by them merely as a pretence for their associations, and with a view to seduce persons, who were not apprized of their traitorous designs, to unite with them.” The disappointment and foreboding of the public mind disposed immense multitudes to associate upon these lawful, and, according to them, most laudable grounds. Some leading heads of these societies, whose real views, according to the Report of the secret committee, always were to separate Ireland from Great Britain, took advantage of the critical moment, and converted this increased austerity of government into a most powerful engine for forwarding their traitorous designs. That Report informs us, that

* 7 Lords' Journal, 580.

“ in 1795 * the test of the society underwent a striking revision, the words
 “ in the amended test stand, ‘ a full representation of all the people,’ omitting
 “ the words ‘ in the Commons’ House of Parliament;’ the reason for which
 “ had been admitted by three † members of the executive, examined before
 “ your

* 17 Commons Journal, Appendix DCCCXXIX.

† These were Messrs. O’Connor, Emmett, and Dr. M’Neven, who, whilst in prison wrote a detailed Memoire of the origin and progress of the Irish union, and delivered it in to the Irish government. It has been since printed, together with their report of their examination before the committee, whom they accuse of having published a partial and garbled account of it. In that work, they give the following account of the progress of the union at this critical period. (Page 3) “ The
 “ first of these societies was, as we best recollect, in the year 1795. In order to secure co-operation
 “ and uniformity of action, they organized a system of committees, baronial, county, and provin-
 “ cial, and even national; but it was long before the skeleton of this organization was filled up.
 “ While the formation of these societies was in agitation, the friends of liberty were gradually, but
 “ with a timid step, advancing towards republicanism; they began to be convinced, that it would
 “ be as easy to obtain a revolution as a reform, so obstinately was the latter resisted; and as the
 “ conviction impressed itself on their minds, they were inclined not to give up the struggle, but to
 “ extend their views; it was for this reason that in their test the words are ‘ an equal representation
 “ of all the people of Ireland,’ without inserting the word parliament. This test embraced both the
 “ republican and the reformer, and left to future circumstances to decide, to which point the com-
 “ mon strength should be directed; but still the whole body, we are convinced, would rejoice
 “ to stop short at reform. Another consideration, however, led the minds of reflecting united
 “ Irishmen to look towards a republic and separation from England; this was the war with France;
 “ they clearly perceived that their strength was not likely to become speedily equal to wresting from
 “ the English and the borough interest in Ireland even a reform; foreign assistance would, there-
 “ fore, perhaps become necessary; but foreign assistance could only be hoped for in proportion as
 “ the object to which it would be applied was important to the party giving it. A reform in the
 “ Irish parliament was no object to the French, a separation of Ireland from England was a mighty
 “ one indeed. Thus they reasoned: shall we, between two objects, confine ourselves to the least
 “ valuable, even though it is equally difficult to be obtained, if we consider the relation of Ireland
 “ with the rest of Europe.

“ Whatever progress the united system had made among the Catholics throughout the kingdom,
 “ until after the recel of Lord Fitzwilliam, notwithstanding many resolutions, which had appeared
 “ from them, manifesting a growing spirit, they were considered as entertaining an habitual spirit
 “ for monarchy, but also as being less attached than the presbyterians to political liberty. There
 “ were, however, certain men among them, who rejoiced at the rejection of their claims, because it
 “ gave them an opportunity of pointing out that the adversaries of reform were their adversaries;
 “ and that these two objects could never be separated with any chance of success to either. They
 “ used the recel of that nobleman, and the rejection of his measures, to cement together in political
 “ union the Catholic and Presbyterian masses.

“ The

“ your committee, to be the better to reconcile reformers and republicans in
 “ a common exertion to overthrow the state.”

Having failed in their attempt and despairing of ever attaining Catholic emancipation under the then existing spirit of the government, the united Irishmen held out, that the only gleam of hope was to arise out of a reform of parliament; that had ever been their great rallying point; they now gave out, that they systemized their plan merely for the purpose of obtaining with quicker and surer effect, *a radical* reform in the representation of the people, founded on the principles of civil, political and religious liberty. From reflection and experience, they were convinced, that no system but that of union could succeed; they therefore formed themselves into affiliated societies, and adopted the following solemn test;

“ In the awful presence of God, I. A. B. do voluntarily declare, that I will
 “ persevere in endeavouring to form a brotherhood of affection among Irish-
 “ men of every religious persuasion; and that I will also persevere in my en-
 “ deavours to obtain an equal, full, and adequate representation of all the
 “ people in Ireland. I do further declare, that neither hopes, fears, rewards,
 “ or punishments, shall ever induce me, directly or indirectly, to inform on,
 “ or give evidence against any member or members of this or similar societies,
 “ for any act or expression of theirs done or made, collectively or individually,
 “ in or out of this society, in pursuance of the spirit of this obligation.”

So eagerly did persons of every denomination give into that plan, that in the course of the year societies were formed in most parts of the kingdom. The moment the people began to feel the powerful effects of union, the gentlemen in place became frightfully alarmed for their situations; active agents were sent down to Armagh, to turn the ferocity and fanaticism of the *Peep of Day Boys* into a religious contest with the Catholics under the specious appearances of zeal for church and king. Personal animosity was artfully converted into religious rancour: and for the specious purpose of taking off the stigma of delinquency, the appellation of *Peep of Day Boys* was changed into that of *Orange Men*. At first no person of consequence appeared in it: the first lodge was formed on the 21st of September, 1795. Like the *United Irish-*

“ The modern societies, for their protection against informers and prosecution, had introduced
 “ into their test a clause of secrecy. They did more,—they changed the engagement of their pre-
 “ decessors into an oath; and mutual confidence encreased, when religion was called in aid of
 “ mutual security.”

men,

men, they were soon affiliated, and their numbers increased. Their professions widely differed from their practices: they pretended to support only that constitution, which had been given to the country by William the Prince of Orange: but their conduct, as will be seen hereafter, was little guided by the liberal principles of the Revolution. *Their test is said to have been: "In the awful presence of Almighty God, I A. B. do solemnly swear, that I will, to the utmost of my power, support the king and the present government; and I do further swear, that I will use my utmost exertions to exterminate all the Catholics of the kingdom of Ireland." But this oath, though secret, has latterly been denied by the Orangemen of respectability and consequence. It has been generally credited, that it was taken by all the original lodges, and continued afterwards to be taken by the lower classes at least, if not privately by all Orangemen. The exterminating spirit of the oath was too often acted upon, as will be seen hereafter. The great increase of the Orange institution did not take place till the ensuing year.

The spirit and boldness of the defenders in the summer of 1795 assumed a most formidable appearance: but so far were they from being countenanced and supported by the body of Catholics, that their most open outrages were attempted against some Catholic magistrates in the county of Kildare; where they appeared† in bodies of several hundreds. In the course of this year Lord Carhampton finding that certain districts under his command were overrun by these defenders with impunity, took a summary mode of restoring tranquillity, by exerting a vigour beyond the law,‡ which was as highly applauded by government, as it was severely reprobated by the opposition.

In

* This form of test is what is generally believed to have been in use amongst the Orangemen: but the author has no authentic document for it. It is so stated in a pamphlet published in 1797, called, *A View of the present State of Ireland*, by an observer, said to have been written by Mr. A. O'Connor. They were always said to have a secret test, which they called their *Purple Oath*. The secret committee of the Lords in 1798 asked Mr. A. O'Connor, if government had any thing to do with their *Oath of Extermination*.

† The resolutions of the county of Kildare, which shew the conduct of the defenders and the spirit of the county in resisting them, are to be seen in the Appendix, No. XCVIII.

‡ What the real consequence of this strong measure of Lord Carhampton was, remains still doubtful to many. It is thus represented by Sir Richard Musgrave, p. 145. "Lord Carhampton finding that the laws were silent and inoperative in the counties which he visited, and that they did not afford protection to the loyal and peaceable subjects, who in most places were obliged

In this alarming state of the country a very laudable example was set to the nation at large by the Marquis of Waterford, by heading a subscription of some hundred respectable persons, who took that opportunity of shewing their
loyalty

“ to fly from their habitations, resolved to restore them to their usual energy, by the following salutary system of severity :

“ In each county he assembled the most respectable gentlemen and landholders in it, and having, in concert with them, examined the charges against the leaders of this banditti, who were in prison, but defied justice, he, with the concurrence of these gentlemen, sent the most nefarious of them on board a tender, stationed at Sligo, to serve in his majesty’s navy.

“ By this bold measure, founded in obvious principles of political necessity, he completely restored peace in the disturbed counties.

“ The loyal inhabitants, and the grand juries in them, thanked Lord Carhampton for his wife and salutary exertions ; but the disaffected in every part of the kingdom, exasperated that he had checked the progress of their revolutionary schemes, raised a great clamour in consequence of it ; and as they meditated many prosecutions and civil actions against him, a law was passed in the month of February, 1796, to indemnify such persons as had exceeded the limits of the law in restoring peace and good order ; which, as a matter of course, was violently opposed by the minority in the House of Commons.”

On the other hand it is represented from the pen of Mr. Grattan in the petition from the Whig club in the following light, p. 6. “ In order to punish additional discontents, the effect of Lord Fitzwilliam’s removal, and the public disappointment that followed ; in order to support the Irish ministry that succeeded, and returned with their old maxims of government, they thought proper to proceed against the people without any form or process whatsoever ; and laying aside the incumbrance of statute, and the delay of law, they suffered their general and other magistrates to form themselves into a species of revolutionary tribunal, where these men sat without law, tried without law, sentenced without law, and punished without law ; not a few individuals, but hordes, tribes, and generations of country people, sent on board a tender often on this principle, that if tried before a court of law, they would probably be acquitted. His majesty has heard the effect of this policy, in the mutiny of his fleet. It has been said, that the law was open ; we submit to his majesty, that it was far otherwise : for a bill of indemnity was passed, nearly in the style and manner of acclamation, without enquiry, the proposal of which was rejected with an outcry ; which bill of indemnity went to secure the offending magistrates against the consequences of their outrages and illegalities ; that is to say, in our humble conception, the poor were stricken out of the protection of the law, and the rich out of its penalties ; and then another bill was passed, to give such lawless proceedings against his majesty’s subjects continuation ; namely, a bill to enable the magistrates to perpetrate by law, those offences which they had before committed against it ; a bill to legalize outrage, to barbarize law, and to give the law itself the cast and colour of outrage. By such a bill, the magistrates were enabled, without legal process, to send on board a tender his majesty’s subjects, and the country was divided into two classes, or formed into two distinct nations, living under the same king, and inhabiting the same island ; one con-
“ sitting

loyalty and attachment to our gracious sovereign by publicly concurring in opinion, that a Waterford regiment ought to be raised, in which there should be no distinction of religion, but that Protestants and Catholics should be indiscriminately united. This example was not followed up. So rapidly and widely did 'defenderism' in this year spread its baneful effects, that the respectable inhabitants of most counties throughout the kingdom found it necessary to enter into associations and subscriptions in self-defence. In the summer assizes of this year several defenders were tried and found guilty of high treason; and in the month of September, the animosities of the defenders and peep-of-day boys were renewed in the county of Armagh, to such a degree, that the defenders remained for several days openly under arms. On the 21st of September, the battle of the Diamond, so called from the village of that name, was fought, in which the defenders, though greatly superior in number, were worsted with considerable slaughter. From this defeat of the defenders, is to be traced the increased rancour and ferocity of their opponents, who, as before observed, henceforward had formed themselves into clubs of Orangemen, and thereby having increased their strength, proceeded, as will afterwards appear, to exterminate the whole race of Catholics out of the county of Armagh, and that neighbourhood.

When the parliament met on the 21st of January, 1796, the lord lieutenant in his speech from the throne congratulated with them on the improvement of the general situation of affairs on the continent. The continued and brilliant successes of the Austrian armies upon the Rhine, the important captures of the Cape of Good Hope and Trincomale by his majesty's forces, and the decided and confirmed superiority of his fleets, were circumstances of the utmost importance to the common cause; and their effect was strengthened by the internal distresses, the ruined commerce, and financial embarrassments of the enemy. The crisis lately depending in France had led to an order of things in that country, such as would induce his majesty to meet any disposition to negotiation on the part of the enemy, with an earnest desire to give

"sisting of the king's magistrates, and the other of the king's subjects; the former without restraint, and the latter without privilege."

"The supporters of his majesty's ministers have boasted of the effects of their bills, in establishing security; we lament that we cannot believe them; and we know very well how sanguine they have been on similar subjects, and how miserably they have deluded government and themselves."

* 16 P.D. p. 2.

it the fullest and speediest effect, and to conclude a treaty of general peace, when it might be effected on just and suitable terms for himself and his allies. The treaty of commerce between his majesty and the United States of America having been mutually ratified, he had ordered copies of it by his majesty's command to be laid before them.

The event of her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales having been happily delivered of a Princess was also announced.

His excellency congratulated the commons, that notwithstanding the continued pressure of the war, the commerce and revenues of the kingdom had not in any degree fallen from that flourishing state of advancement, which in the last session of parliament was a subject of such just congratulation. That circumstance afforded a decisive proof that their prosperity was founded on a solid basis, and led to indulge the flattering hope, that whatever additional burdens might be necessary to impose would not be materially felt by the people.

He then generally adverted to those secret and treasonable associations, the dangerous extent and malignity of which had in some degree been disclosed on several trials, and to the disturbances, which had taken place in some parts of the kingdom. It had at the same time been a source of great satisfaction to him to observe the successful and meritorious exertions of the magistrates in several parts of the kingdom, and the alacrity, which his majesty's regular and militia forces had universally manifested in aid of the civil power, whenever they had been called upon for the preservation of the peace and support of the laws. It remained for their prudence and wisdom to devise such measures as, together with a continuance of those exertions, and the additional powers, which, by the advice of the privy council, he had thought it necessary to establish in different counties, would prevent the return of similar excesses, and restore a proper reverence for the law of the country.

Lord Tyrone moved an address to his majesty, and was seconded by Col. Foster.

Mr. Grattan said, that the address, as far as expressing our abhorrence at the daring outrage committed on the person of our sovereign, and as far as expressing our congratulations on the increase of his domestic happiness, and as far as it went to compliment Lord Camden, met with his approbation; but that part of the address, which expressed a confidence in the present administration,

nistration, met with his decided disapprobation. He said, that Ireland had not been treated with respect. The people of Ireland were loyal to their sovereign, and how had they been treated? The system of the British minister had been to treat them uniformly with insolence and contumely; and the system of the administration for these several years past had been profligate and corrupt. He took a retrospect of the administration of the Marquis of Buckingham, who was sent over to promise that which he did not perform. He adverted to the sale of peerages, for the purpose of obtaining a corrupt and undue influence in the House of Commons, which had been part of the system of the Buckingham administration; he next adverted to the dispensing power of the Earl of Westmorland to take away the army from that kingdom, contrary to law, which should always consist of an effective force of 12,000 men for the home defence, and which in the months of June, July, August, September, October, and November, were considerably under that number. In the American war, they had been left naked; and in the French war they had been left naked. These were two impeachable crimes under the British administration.

He reprobated the conduct of a former administration towards the Catholics of the country: the horns of government were sent out to the different county grand juries, in order to procure addresses and resolutions to wall out the Catholics from the constitution, as the English had formerly walled out the Scotch, and the Chinese the Tartars. He said, that the British cabinet, during the administration of Lord Fitzwilliam, had broken faith with Ireland. He reprobated the conduct of Lord Westmorland in granting the reversion of every capital employment in the kingdom, after his successor had been appointed; and that during his administration, fourteen new employments had been created, and thirteen reversions granted away; this system he reprobated in very strong and severe terms: he said, that the conduct of the British cabinet towards their country was influenced by false witnesses against Ireland; by bad viceroys, who had acted in their administration unfavorably to Ireland; and if not by bad viceroys, the British cabinet was influenced by clerks, by spies, and by runners.

Having dwelt for some time on the conduct of the British cabinet towards his country, which had drained itself of its men and money for the support of Great Britain, he contrasted the conduct of the British cabinet towards
other

other countries. He concluded a speech of considerable length with moving an amendment to the address nearly to the following purport :

“ That they should pay the utmost attention to every measure for the purpose
“ of preserving the peace and good order of the country, and to amend the
“ condition of the lower description of the people in this kingdom ; with a
“ view to render the connection between the two countries the more endear-
“ ing, and to enable them more cheerfully to contribute to such burthens as
“ should be imposed upon them, they humbly beseeched his majesty, that he
“ would be graciously pleased to recommend to his parliament in England
“ to adopt such measures for the admission of the manufactures of that king-
“ dom into the ports of Great Britain on terms not less advantageous than
“ what manufactures of Great Britain were admitted into the ports of
“ Ireland.”

Mr. Vandeleur seconded the motion.

After Mr. Grattan's amendment had been rejected by a majority of 122 against 14,* the attorney general called the attention of gentlemen to the subject of disturbances in some parts of the country ; to check those offences, he would introduce a bill, and in that bill perhaps, or in a separate bill, would have a clause to indemnify certain magistrates and others, who acted for the public good, though not exactly under the existing laws, in suppressing these disturbances. He had mentioned, upon his return from some prosecutions, which were carried on about three years ago, his intention to bring in a bill to make a conspiracy to murder felony ; he had hoped, that this declaration would in some measure have checked the evil ; but he was sorry to say, it had not : conspiracies to murder were still frequent, and the idea of assassination had become as familiar as that of fowling.

Mr. Curran wished to know the extent and nature of that delinquency, which it was intended to indemnify ; when Mr. M. Beresford observed, the word delinquency was not applicable to the persons intended ; a part of the country was alarmingly disturbed ; the magistrates and others invested with power had, in order to prevent the necessity of proclaiming martial law universally, acted in that particular district, as if martial law were proclaimed : this conduct, so far from being delinquency, was justifiable and laudable, and of happy consequence in the event.

* 16 Parl. Deb. p. 12.

On the 28th of the month the attorney general adverted to the notice he had given on the first night of the session of his intention of bringing in two bills: the object of one of them was, for preventing in future insurrections, and tumults, and riots in this kingdom; and the object of the other bill was, to indemnify certain magistrates and others, who, in their exertions for the preservation of the public tranquillity, might have acted against the forms and rules of law; he stated, that the bill for the more effectually preventing of insurrections, tumults, and riots by persons styling themselves defenders, and other disorderly persons, was however repugnant to his feelings, a bloody penal code.

He said, that the acts then in force for administering unlawful oaths was not sufficiently strong, and the administering of unlawful oaths was the source of all the treasonable actions, which had taken place in the country; the bill proposed, that the administering of unlawful oaths should be felony of death; but he would propose, that that bill should be but a temporary law; there was also a clause in the bill to enable the magistrates, at the quarter sessions, to take up all idle vagrants and persons who had no visible means of earning a livelihood, and send them to serve on board the fleet: he said, he did not propose to hurry this bill through the house, but give time for the consideration, as it might be necessary to add much, and make several alterations. He then moved for leave "to bring in a bill for the more effectually preventing "of insurrections, tumults, and riots, by persons styling themselves defenders, "and other disorderly persons;" and leave was given to bring in the bill. Then he moved for leave "to bring in a bill for indemnifying such magistrates and others, who might have, since the 1st of January, 1795, exceeded "the ordinary forms and rules of law for the preservation of the public "peace, and suppression of insurrection prevailing in some parts of this kingdom;" which was also given without any opposition.

On the same day Mr. Curran's motion for appointing a committee to enquire into the state of the poor, and the price of labour in that kingdom, after a considerable debate was negatived by the question of adjournment, there being only 16 for going into the committee, and 137 for the adjournment. A proportionate division also took place, by the chancellor of the Exchequer's moving the order of the day on Mr. Grattan's motion for equalizing the channel trade between Great Britain and Ireland, by reciprocally ad-
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mitting the manufactures of either country into the other upon equal rates of duty.*

†On the 20th of February, 1796, the attorney general prefaced four resolutions, which he proposed to the house, with an historical detail of the outrageous conduct of the defenders. The country had been for a series of years disturbed in various parts of it; he should not then enter into the causes of those disturbances, but he should take them up at the period of 1790, when those disturbances chiefly raged in the county of Meath. The Defenders object then was to plunder the peaceable inhabitants in that county of their fire arms: they associated together, and bound themselves by the solemn tie of an oath. The Defenders, it had since appeared, had their committee men and their captains, whom they were bound to obey, and their object was to overthrow the established order of government. Seditious emissaries dispersed themselves among the people; in one place, telling the labouring man that his wages would be raised; and in another, working upon their feelings, and enticing them to acts of violence and of outrage. To repress these disturbances, the efforts of government were exerted in 1790, 1791, and 1792; and the consequence was, that a great number were brought to justice, and several were transported: notwithstanding these examples, the disturbances continued, and they proceeded from the east to the west, and in three counties in Connaught, these banditti, in open day, made an attack upon the king's forces: the army always routed them, and in one engagement, forty or fifty of these miscreants fell: there were prosecutions in that province, and several were brought to justice, and a great number were transported: that province then was in a state of tranquillity (thanks to Lord Carhampton), through whose exertions, humanity, and good conduct, quiet was restored. Notwithstanding these examples, disturbances continued in other parts of the kingdom. These wretches associated together by night for the purpose of plunder, murder and devastation. To prevent witnesses appearing against them on trial, they had adopted a system of assassination. He instanced the transaction which took place about ten days before, near Luttrellstown, where the Cormicks, who were to prosecute Defenders the very next day, at the quarter sessions of Kilmainham, were most inhumanly murdered. Another

* 16 Parl. Deb. p. 77. This much debated on the 15th of February, 1796.

† 16 Parl. Deb. p. 102.

part of their system was, to put witnesses to death after trial; and he instanced a case, where a witness who had prosecuted Defenders at the assizes of Dundalk, had been murdered after the trial: he instanced many acts of atrocity committed in the county of Longford, particularly the case of Mr. Harman, one of the representatives for the county, and in the county of Westmeath, Cavan, and Meath: under these circumstances, some new scheme was necessary to put an end to such enormities.

His first object was, to prevent these risings in future; in order to do this, it was proper to enable government, on the petition of gentlemen resident in a county where any rising should be, to send a force to that county, sufficient to quell such rising: another was, to enable the magistrates at sessions to take up at unreasonable hours all persons, who could not give a satisfactory account of themselves, and if they could not find bail at assizes, the justices might send them to serve on board the fleet: another was, to enable magistrates to search houses, and if the persons were not found at home, they might be brought to the quarter sessions, and if they could not give a satisfactory account of the cause of their absence from home, they were to be dealt with as persons found abroad at unreasonable hours; but previous to that, proclamation should be made, and public and fair notice given, so that no person should have any excuse to plead: another object was, to enable magistrates to search houses for arms and ammunition. It might be spread abroad by evil and disaffected men, that it was the design of government to disarm the people; but there was no such design; it was only to take away arms from improper persons; but, he said, he should introduce a clause in the gunpowder bill, to make every person, both great and small, to register their fire arms; he should propose to make the administering of such oaths, as bound the parties to any treasonable purpose, a capital offence; there was another measure, which was, that in case of a witness being murdered, his written testimony should be competent to go as evidence to the jury. After some further statements, he read the resolutions which he intended to propose, and he afterwards moved them separately, which were as follow:

1. “ *Resolved*, That the spirit of conspiracy and outrage, which has appeared in certain parts of this kingdom, and has shewn itself in various attempts to assassinate magistrates, to murder witnesses, to plunder houses, and seize by force the arms of his majesty’s peaceable subjects, requires, that more effectual powers should be given to the magistracy.

2. “ *Resolved*, That (in such parts of this kingdom, as the said spirit has shewn itself, or to which there may be cause to apprehend its being extended) it will be necessary, that the magistracy should have enlarged powers of searching for arms, ammunition, and weapons of offence, and of seizing or securing the same, for the preservation of the peace, and the safety of the lives and properties of his majesty’s peaceable and loyal subjects.

3. “ *Resolved*, That from the many attacks which have been made on the houses of individuals, by large bodies of armed insurgents, for the purpose of taking arms and money by force, and murdering those, who had the spirit to enforce the laws, or give information against offenders, it will be necessary, that the magistracy should have enlarged powers, to prevent such bodies hereafter from assembling or meeting, either to plan or execute such horrid purposes.

4. “ *Resolved*, That it will be necessary to give the magistracy further powers with respect to vagabonds, idle and disorderly persons, and to persons liable to be deemed so, or who have no lawful trade, or any honest means to obtain a livelihood.”*

Mr. Vandeleur perfectly agreed with the attorney general, as to the necessity of adopting some strong measures at that juncture. With respect to the last of the resolutions—that which related to the investing of the ma-

* The only person in the house who opposed these resolutions, was Lord Edward Fitzgerald. His unfortunate end may affix a retrospective import to his conduct, perhaps, before he had harboured the dreadful designs, which tarnished the latter period of his life. (16 *Parl. Deb.* p. 105.) “ Sir,” said he, “ I shall oppose this resolution, because I think that this resolution will not prevent the crimes of which the right honorable gentleman complains: the disturbances of the country, sir, are not to be remedied by any coercive measures, however strong: such measures will tend rather to exasperate, than to remove the evil. Nothing, sir, can effect this, and restore tranquillity to the country, but a serious and candid endeavour of government, and of this house, to redress the grievances of the people. Redress those, and the people will return to their allegiance and their duty: suffer them to continue, and neither your resolutions nor your bills will have any effect: I shall, therefore, sir, oppose, not only this resolution, but all the resolutions, which the right honorable gentleman has read to you, except, perhaps, one—that which goes to constitute the written testimony of a dying witness, good evidence. This, I think, is fair, and likely to facilitate the course of justice, without violently infringing, as all the other resolutions seem to do, the liberty of the subject.”

gistracy with new powers—he should not now, he said, give any opinion. Of the others he heartily approved, though he could not help expressing a wish, that they had taken some notice of the wanton and barbarous outrages, which had been committed by the Peep-of-Day Boys, as well as those, of which the Defenders had been guilty.

On the next day upon the attorney general's resolutions being read, Mr. Grattan observed, that he had heard the right honorable gentleman's statement, and did not suppose it to be inflamed; but he must observe at the same time it was partial: he did indeed expatiate very fully and justly on the offences of the Defenders; but with respect to another description of insurgents, whose barbarities had excited general abhorrence, he had observed a complete silence: that he had proceeded to enumerate the counties that were afflicted by disturbances, and he had omitted Armagh;—of that, neither had he comprehended the outrages in his general description, nor in his particular enumeration: of those outrages, he had received the most dreadful accounts; that their object was the extermination of all the Catholics of that county; it was a persecution conceived in the bitterness of bigotry, carried on with the most ferocious barbarity, by a banditti, who being of the religion of the state, had committed with the greater audacity and confidence, the most horrid murders, and had proceeded from robbery and massacre to extermination; that they had repealed, by their own authority, all the laws lately passed in favor of the Catholics, had established in the place of those laws, the inquisition of a mob, resembling Lord George Gordon's fanatics, equalling them in outrage, and surpassing them far in perseverance and success.

That their modes of outrage were as various as they were atrocious: they sometimes forced, by terror, the masters of families to dismiss their Catholic servants—they sometimes forced landlords, by terror, to dismiss their Catholic tenantry—they seized, as deserters, numbers of Catholic weavers—sent them to the county goal, transmitted them to Dublin, where they remained in close prison, until some lawyers from compassion pleaded their cause, and procured their enlargement—nothing appearing against them of any kind whatsoever.—Those insurgents, who called themselves Orange Boys, or Protestant Boys, that is, a banditti of murderers, committing massacre in the name of God, and exercising despotic power in the name of liberty—those insurgents had organized their rebellion, and formed themselves into a com-

mittee, who sat and tried the Catholic weavers and inhabitants, when apprehended falsely and illegally as deserters. That rebellious committee, they called the committee of elders, who, when the unfortunate Catholic was torn from his family and his loom, and brought before them, in judgment upon his case—if he gave them liquor or money, they sometimes discharged him—otherwise they sent him to a recruiting office as a deserter. They had very generally given the Catholics notice to quit their farms and dwellings, which notice was plastered on the house, and conceived in these short but plain words: “Go to Hell, Connaught won’t receive you—fire and faggot. Will “Tresham and John Thurstout.” That they followed these notices by a faithful and punctual execution of the horrid threat—soon after visited the house, robbed the family, and destroyed what they did not take, and finally completed the atrocious persecutions, by forcing the unfortunate inhabitants to leave their land, their dwellings, and their trade, and to travel with their miserable family, and with whatever their miserable family could save from the wreck of their houses and tenements, and take refuge in villages, as fortifications against invaders, where they described themselves, as he had seen in their affidavits, in the following manner: “We (mentioning their names), “formerly of Armagh, weavers, now of no fixed place of abode or means of “living, &c.” In many instances this banditti of persecution threw down the houses of the tenantry, or what they call racked the house, so that the family must fly or be buried in the grave of their own cabin. The extent of the murders that had been committed by that atrocious and rebellious banditti, he had heard, but had not heard them so ascertained as to state them to that house; but from all the enquiries he could make, he collected, that the Catholic inhabitants of Armagh had been actually put out of the protection of the law; that the magistrates had been supine or partial, and that the horrid banditti had met with complete success, and from the magistracy with very little discouragement. This horrid persecution, this abominable barbarity, and this general extermination had been acknowledged by the magistrates, who found the evil had now proceeded to so shameful an excess, that it had at length obliged them to cry out against it. On the 28th of December thirty of the magistrates had come to the following resolution, which was evidence of the designs of the insurgents, and of their success: “*Resolved*, That it appears to this meeting, that the county of Armagh is at “this moment in a state of uncommon disorder; that the Roman Catholic
“inhabitants

“ inhabitants are grievously oppressed by lawless persons unknown, who attack and plunder their houses by night, and threaten them with instant destruction, unless they abandon immediately their lands and habitations.” It was said by the mover of the resolutions, that of the Defenders, multitudes had been hanged, multitudes had been put to death on the field, and that they were suppressed, though they were not extinguished; but with regard to the outrages of the Orange Boys, he could make no such boast: on the contrary, they had met with impunity, and success, and triumph; they had triumphed over the law, they had triumphed over the magistrates, and they had triumphed over the people. There persecution, rebellion, inquisition, murder, robbery, devastation and extermination had been entirely victorious.

The passing over these offences in the statement introducing the resolutions, would be of little moment, if they were not also passed over in the resolutions themselves: the resolutions described four different kinds of offences: 1st, attempts to assassinate magistrates; 2d, to murder witnesses; 3d, to plunder houses; 4th, to seize by force the arms of his majesty's subjects: but of attempts to seize the persons of his majesty's subjects, and to force them to abandon their lands and habitations, the resolutions said not one syllable; crimes not less great, nor less notorious, and more emphatically calling for the interposition of the state, because they had triumphed over the supineness of the magistracy, and had no chance of being checked, but by the interposition of government or parliament. In the other resolution, which described that kind of armed insurgency, which the magistracy were to prevent by extraordinary exertions, the crime of driving away his majesty's subjects, is also omitted: the words were, that from the many attempts which have been made on the houses of individuals, by large bodies of armed insurgents, for the purpose of taking arms and money by force, and murdering those who had spirit to enforce the law, or give information against offenders, it will be necessary to give the magistrates enlarged powers; attempts made on the houses of the individual to rob or take arms; attempts to murder witnesses; those were the offences which attracted their notice; but the attempt to exterminate his majesty's subjects—attempts in part completed, which were very different from seizing arms, or taking money, or murdering witnesses—these attempts and perpetrations, as notorious as horrible, appeared to be neither in the contemplation of the resolutions, nor of the member who moved them. Thus the silence of the resolutions might become a hint to the supineness of the magistracy,

magistracy, and where they should have counteracted their partiality, gave it countenance. On a further examination of the resolutions, he found them not merely defective in describing the offence, but they seemed to have omitted the remedy: certainly the giving magistrates further powers to search for arms and ammunition, or to prevent from assembling or meeting bodies of men assembling for the purpose of taking arms and money, or murdering witnesses; or the giving the magistrates enlarged power to seize vagabonds for the fleet or army, did not go to the case of Armagh, where the subjects complained, that they had been seized as deserters, falsely and illegally, through the supineness or partiality, or connivance of the magistrates; and through the same supineness, to say no worse, had been by force driven with impunity from their lands and habitations: many of the weavers of Armagh had at that moment sworn affidavits against the magistrates. To give the magistrates extraordinary powers as the means of redressing the complainants, seemed to him, however, a remedy for some part of the kingdom, but a very inadequate one for another. In short, the measure of the right honorable gentleman, in its present shape, did not go to the whole of the situation of the country: it did not go to redress the North; it was, therefore, a defective measure, it was a partial description of the outrages of the kingdom, and a partial remedy: it proposed to suspend the operation of the constitution, with a view to produce peace, leaving at the same time, in one great county, violence and insurrection in a state of triumph. It left the families of Armagh, whom a violent mob, and a supine magistracy, had caused to abandon their dwellings; it left them without any certainty of redress, so that they might carry themselves and families, and tales of woe, to their brethren in the other parts of the kingdom, and spread the flames of discontent, and spirit of retaliation, notwithstanding the member's bills and resolutions.

On a principle, therefore, that it was necessary for the redress of that description of subjects, who had suffered in Armagh, that the magistrates should be called upon to act for the protection of the subject, and that the county should be obliged to pay those inhabitants, who had been aggrieved, full compensation for all their losses, charges and distresses, he had taken the liberty to suggest to the right honorable member amendments, which he did not move, because the attorney general ought to have moved them, and made them his own measure.

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The amendments he suggested, were after the words "to seize by force of arms," to add "and also the persons of his majesty's subjects, and to force them to abandon their lands and habitations;" and in the third resolution, after the words "murdering those who had spirit to give information," to add, "also attempting to seize the persons, and obliging his majesty's subjects by force, to abandon their lands and habitations."

Sir Lawrence Parsons arraigned government for not having timely sent a general officer and a military force to the disturbed parts of the North, as they had done to the South, particularly as Lord Camden had avowedly come over to resist the Catholic claims.

The attorney general opposed Mr. Grattan's amendment. He said he had, throughout the whole of those resolutions, avoided making any distinction as to persons. They were intended for general good, and persons of every class would partake of their benefits; were the amendment received, they would have a different complexion.

Mr. Secretary Pelham followed on the same ground. If no general officer was sent to the North, it was because they were all before engaged. An officer, however, was sent, and an experienced officer (Colonel Craddock), on whose capacity and character he delivered a high encomium. He mentioned that Lord Camden did not come over to oppress any part of his majesty's subjects, but to afford equal protection to all.

Colonel Craddock avowed, that he had the most decided instructions from government, to act in the commission, in which he had been employed, with equal justice to all offenders. He had been assisted by General Nugent, and such was the nature of the disturbance, that after repeated consideration, they could see no possible way in which the troops could be employed: he therefore recommended his recall in letters to government, as he thought that he could be of no use. He admitted, that the conduct of the Protestants, called Peep-of-Day Boys, in the county of Armagh was at that time most atrocious, and that their barbarous practices must certainly be put down; but at the same time he must mention, that in September last, the Catholics were the aggressors.

Mr. Grattan, in reply, observed, that the amendment appeared the more necessary, from what fell from an honorable gentleman, a magistrate of the county of Armagh, who dissenting from every other person, had spoken of the use of what he called Orange Boys, of the services rendered by these murderers;

murderers; this atrocious banditti; the northern rebels, whose barbarity exceeded modern times, and brought back the recollection of ancient ferocity and bloodshed. He asked gentlemen who had heard the magistrate apologize for such murderers, whether the encreasing the power of the magistracy would be of itself sufficient to redress the sufferings of the northern Catholics.

He must therefore persist in recommending to the right honorable gentleman his amendments, which, if he persisted to refuse, it was vain for him to move them; lamenting at the same time, that he should have lost an opportunity of so clearly displaying what he must presume he wished—impartiality and justice.

The attorney general presented the bill, which was read a first time, and ordered to be read a second time the next day.

On the second reading of the insurrection bill, Sir Lawrence Parsons spoke very fully to the principle of it, though he did not mean to oppose the second reading. He thought that a bill so severe in its nature should have been preceded by some measure, which would evince the disposition of the house, to attend as well to the sufferings as to the offences of the people. If the design were to tranquillize the country, and he had no doubt but that was sincerely the object of the right honorable gentleman who had introduced the bill, it would have been right first to have enquired into the cause of the disturbances, before such severe measures were taken to repress them; if the root of the evil were once come at, the evil itself would have been easily removed: but by applying merely to the effect, the cause of the evil was left untouched, and the consequence would be, that it would continue to germinate new evils. He was willing to admit, that the situation of the country was rather improved; but who would deny, that the peasantry of Ireland were still miserable to a very great degree. Let gentlemen enter into the cabin of an Irish labourer, and see it without a chimney, often without a fire, and sometimes without food; and then compare his state with the affluence, the elegance, and the pomp, with which the casual circumstances of birth surrounded themselves. He hoped no man would impute to him any wish to inflame the popular mind, or to embarrass his majesty's government. From the commencement of the session, to that hour, he had not brought forward any subject of complaint, nor had he opposed any tax proposed for the security of the state, or the expence of the war. With respect to the bill itself, he thought it was unnecessarily severe; that it was a useless violation of the first principles
of

of the constitution, and that instead of doing service, it was likely to produce a contrary effect. He knew the country gentlemen of Ireland well; he loved them, and throughout that session he had in a great measure regulated his opinion by theirs: he could never believe, that they would support this bill, if they saw it in the true point of view: he could not bring himself to think, that they wished to drive their chariot wheels over the necks of the poor; they wished only to restore tranquillity, and to preserve the peace of Ireland, and certainly they would not surrender the established constitution as an experiment. The bill by enabling the magistracy to send out of the kingdom any man they might think guilty, enacted, in fact, a surrender of the constitution, and instead of restoring tranquillity, would aggravate the disorder. It was a peculiar quality of the common people of Ireland, that they communicated quickly and rapidly their pleasures and their discontents. By that bill, if it passed, and if men were sent out of the kingdom by its operation without trial, the common feeling would be, that the men so transported were innocent; and therefore instead of quieting the discontent of the people, it would afford a new topic for murmur. If on the contrary, the men so punished had been convicted by a jury, if they were punished for crimes fully proved in an open court of justice, the punishment would operate as a salutary example; and if sedition should murmur at their fate, the good sense of the people would disregard its insinuation. The evil consequences of that bill would extend beyond the present time; for the common people of Ireland were remarkable for a tenacious remembrance of injuries. He instanced the affair of the regiment raised in Ireland, principally in the metropolis, in the last war; they were called the Green Linnetts: these men had been enlisted under a promise, that they should not be sent out of the kingdom; but when the regiment was completed, the officers took an opportunity one evening of securing and confining the whole of them, and embarking them in the morning for America. After a lapse of several years, the people of Ireland remembered this fraud so well, that it was a very great impediment, in the beginning, to the recruiting of the militia. If this law would probably be a cause of discontent to every quarter of the country, how much more so must it be in the county of Armagh. In that county it had been proved on oath, that several magistrates refused to take the examination of the injured Catholics. By some of those magistrates, they had been most cruelly prosecuted: others would hear them only out of the window, and some actually turned them

from their doors with threats. If such men were entrusted with a power of transporting men at pleasure, what was there to be expected, but the most gross and flagrant violations of justice? After expatiating for some time on this subject with great earnestness, he concluded by recommending it to gentlemen, if they persevered in the measure, that they would at least remember, that the country was engaged in a war, of which the wisest among them could not foresee the event; that a great part of the able and young in the country were then engaged in guilt, which that act would make capital; that it might soon become necessary to apply to those very persons for safety, against a powerful foe, and that therefore it would be wise to introduce some clause of amnesty for past offences, not including murders: to neglect such a clause, would be to reduce the majority of the peasantry of Ireland to the alternative of either persisting in guilt and treason or submitting to the halter.

Mr. Cuffe could scarcely believe that his honorable friend had uttered such sentiments as he had just heard. He could not help expressing his strong disapprobation, he might say indignation, at the speech of the honorable baronet. He had taken up precisely those two topics, which of all others it was most mischievous to discuss, and had discussed them in such a manner as was best fitted to make them the most mischievous. He had in the first instance displayed and exaggerated the wretchedness of the peasantry; and in the second, he had talked of allowance for their crimes, and indulgence for their treason. The debate* was carried on till two o'clock in the morning: the bill was read a second time, and on the question for committal, it was opposed by Lord Edward Fitzgerald alone.

When the report from the committee on the attorney general's bill for the better prevention of conspiracies in that kingdom, was before the house, on the 29th of February, †Mr. Grattan observed, that not having been present at the committee, he had been prevented from proposing an amendment,

* In the course of this debate Mr. Archdall animadverted to the affairs of Armagh: he professed habits of intimacy with the noble Lord (Gosford) whose letter or speech upon the subject of that country had made such noise: he declared he thought that letter incautious, and such as the noble lord on reflection would not approve of: he recommended rather the conduct of that nobleman, than his publication as an object of imitation. For this letter, which is a most valuable piece of unimpeachable evidence of the spirit and nature of the persecutions then going forward in Armagh, vide Appendix No. XCIX.

† 16 Parliamentary Debates, p. 150.

which

which he feared from its length, would have but a small chance of being adopted, unless the bill were recommitted; he knew he could move it on report, but it would not have a fair trial in that stage of the bill, and for that reason he wished much, that the bill should be recommitted, as the most parliamentary mode of receiving new matter, and affording to that matter full and ample discussion; the amendment he intended, was to compel the county to pay the countryman, whether labourer or manufacturer, full compensation for his damage and losses to his person, family, or dwelling, suffered in consequence of violent mobs; that he was apprehensive that if the compensation were left optional to the grand jury, nothing would be done; that the grand jury would readily present for damages suffered by magistrates or witnesses, but they probably would not, in the county of Armagh particularly, give any adequate, or indeed any satisfaction for losses suffered by the Catholic weaver or peasant, and therefore it was not enough that grand juries should have the power, it was indispensable to impose the obligation. Government trifled with the northern weaver, when he sent him for satisfaction to a grand jury, composed of those very magistrates, whose supineness, or partiality, or bigotry, had been the cause of his losses and his emigration. He said he therefore had formed a clause, which he would read, and by which it was rendered obligatory on the county, to indemnify the countryman for the injury he received when beaten or abused, or driven from his land and habitation. He said he had read the bill, that he could find no remedy whatsoever in the bill, as at present formed, for such a case, that in the different preambles the grievance was not set forth, and in the various provisions it was not comprehended; that the bill complains of violence to magistrates, of the murder of witnesses, of illegal oaths, &c. &c. but of the threats, and force, and violence offered to certain of his majesty's subjects, whereby they have been forced to quit their trades, their lands, and their tenements, outrages of which the governor of a northern county had complained as unexampled in history, and to which violence and atrocity the magistrates of that county had borne their testimony by a formal resolution, there was in the bill complete silence and omission. The bill proposed to give extra power to magistrates; this might be very effectual, as to certain parts of the country; but what was the grievance of Armagh? That the magistrates had not used the ordinary powers, and in some cases had abused those powers in such a manner, that the subject had not been protected, and the rioter had been encouraged; that the bill

appeared therefore without that clause, was not faithful to its own principle, it was a bill, unless amended, of partial coercion, and partial redress: it punished (as it stood) disturbance in one part of the kingdom; it compromised with disturbances in another; it protected the magistrates of the west and left exposed the poor of the north; it says, if you murder a magistrate, you shall pay his representatives; but if you drive away whole droves of weavers in Armagh, you shall pay nothing, except those persons please, by whose fault they have been driven away, and scattered over the face of the earth. He said that ministers must know perfectly well, that unless the amendment were adopted, the unfortunate description of persons he mentioned would get no redress; the government might indeed send a military force to guard what remained of them, but as to the bill, it left them precisely as they were; to say that the existing law punished the offences committed against them was true, so did the existing law punish the offences committed against magistrates and witnesses, it was therefore an argument against the whole of the bill, as much as against the amendment: but to say that existing law punished those offences in such a summary manner as was necessary to restrain them, was unfounded; the truth was, the existing law was not sufficient for the case of Armagh, and the bill did not advert to that case at all; but it had happened that the poorer classes of people had suffered in other places as well as Armagh from mobs, and their houses had been burned without any redress. When the magistrate had suffered, the jury had given meet compensation; when the countryman had his house pulled down, they in some cases had given nothing; a proof that the existing law was not sufficient, and therefore that the amendment was necessary, and accordingly the amendment was not confined to one county, but was general; and wherever the subject had suffered in his person, property, or dwelling, obliged the county to give him satisfaction: for gentlemen will indemnify one another; but it is not equally certain, that they would indemnify their inferiors; it was therefore submitted to them, that they should take that into consideration, and for the cure of a grievance, as notorious as any set forth in the bill, and as unrelenting and outrageous as any thing suffered by gentleman or magistrate; that they should amend their bill, and adopt a proposal which made it a bill of general relief, and which would tend to reconcile the country people, to the strength of the whole of its provisions, when they found themselves included in its redress and protection. The best way of adopting the amendment, was to re-
commit

commit the bill; for if it were proposed on the report, it was easy to foresee that it would not have a full discussion or a fair chance, whereas if the bill were in a committee, it was impossible that those persons, who were friends to the principle of the bill on the real motive of protecting the subject in a summary manner, should not be friends to the amendment. It was the more desirable to proceed by recommitting the bill, because there were other gentlemen who had amendments to propose, one with respect to juries, which seemed deserving of every consideration. That that proposal, however, of recommitting the bill, did not proceed from a wish to oppose its progress, or to interpose delay, but from a conviction that the bill, without the amendment suggested, was false to its own principle, and from a well grounded fear that the proposal of such an amendment in the house, would not be attended with a fair trial, a full discussion, or the chance of success.

The attorney general replied to Mr. Grattan. He opposed the recommitment, because the objects at which the amendments to be proposed aimed, were already attained by the existing laws. Those offences which had been mentioned by the right honorable gentleman, as being prevalent in the county of Armagh, and which were called papering, i. e. the expulsion of persons from their lands or habitations, by affixing written threats on their houses, &c. were already made felony of death, by the acts of the 15th and 16th of George II. It was therefore unnecessary to enact new punishments in this bill, against a crime to which the law had already annexed the highest penalty which could be inflicted. With respect to the other object, that of indemnity to the sufferers, that too was already provided for by law; for at present the grand jury at the recommendation of the judge before whom the loss sustained by the party complaining must be proved, may present such a sum as they may think adequate. If the right honorable gentleman did not think this enough, the proper mode would be to bring in a bill, to amend the existing act on that subject, instead of introducing the subject into that bill.

Sir Lawrence Parsons said, that the powers, which the bill created, were in many instances so dangerous and arbitrary, that he should vote for its recommitment, hoping some qualifications might be adopted on further deliberation; but at the same time he confessed, he was not without fears that the recommitment might be productive of a contrary effect; for in the present temper of gentlemen's minds, the longer it would be under consideration the more repugnant perhaps it would become to his principles. Such an apprehension

was

was justified by the clause against persons selling seditious papers, which from being a partial encroachment upon the liberty of the press, had grown under the correction of the committee into a power totally destructive of it. By that clause, there was not a printer or bookseller in the kingdom, that might not be seized at any time, by any two magistrates whatsoever, for selling any paper or pamphlet, which they might deem seditious,* and without any form of trial sent aboard the fleet. It had always been maintained in England by the most constitutional judges, that it was contrary to law and liberty in the trial of any publisher of a seditious paper, to deny the jury the power of judging of the law as well as the fact, but in that country thereafter, a jury was not to judge of the law, nor even of the fact, nor to have any part in such adjudications, nor were its judges independent and immovable but by parliament, nor was it in public court with the solemnities of a trial, but two magistrates holding their offices at will under a servant of the crown, who were to decide on both law and fact, in private, in their own chamber.

Such was the law, which their committee had framed in a midnight hour, and in a thin and exhausted house, and which they were then called upon to adopt without further deliberation. If the most arbitrary spirits through the whole kingdom had been brought together, with the most studious selection, to compose an arbitrary law against the liberty of the press, they could scarcely have devised any thing more destructive than that. Yet that was but a subordinate part of the present bill. Look at the other clauses; in every one of them the same summary power, deposited in the same persons. Now if the popular disturbances made it necessary to deposit an arbitrary power some where, would it not be wise to pause a little, and consider where it might be best deposited? Was it with the magistrates? Men, in order to be good judges, should be cool and impartial; but in all disturbed counties the magistrates, instead of being cool, were in a high state of inflammation against the objects of that bill, and it was natural they should be so. They were not to be re-

* Mr. Tighe had in his speech observed, that it was, perhaps, one of the nicest points to decide what was a seditious writing. Among gentlemen, even of that house, there probably would be a great difference of opinion on any given publication, whether it were seditious or not? He was not sure that some gentlemen would not think Arthur Young's book seditious. It was doubtful whether Burke's letter to Sir Hercules Langrishe was not in some passages rank sedition; and even Locke, the best writer he knew on government, might, probably with truth, in a country so governed as this, be called a seditious and inflammatory publication.

prehended for that, but certainly on that account, they were among the last persons, that should be entrusted with an uncontrollable power. And so far from being impartial, it was impossible that they should be so, for they were themselves parties. What was the temper observable in that house? There from superior manners and education, the human passions were much mitigated, and they saw far more temper and clemency in that house than could be expected from the inferior magistrates in the country? Yet what was the fact? That even there, every thing said, however violent against the disturbers of the peace was received with plaudits, but if any thing be said to soften over-charged resentments, and to mix mercy with punishment, it was heard with discontent and murmurs. Liberty of speech was questioned—the most unworthy motives were assigned; they were called advocates for those disturbers—and for what? Because, though they reprehended their atrocities, though willing to concur in powerful laws for their suppression, they would not with a savage ferocity consider nothing but their vices, and refuse to offer some humane considerations to sooth, if possible, the exacerbated feelings of the time. That these disturbers must be put down, they all agreed. The difference was as to the mode. Some said, that any two magistrates, without any trial, should send any man they suspected, aboard the fleet, any man out of his house before sunrise, &c. They said, add a jury to the magistrates—and let it be by trial in open court. The stronger the law was made against them, the more desperate their situation. In the county of Armagh, an amnesty for both parties seemed peculiarly necessary; for either under the denomination of Peep-of-Day boys, or of Defenders, almost every man of the lower orders of every sect was implicated in offences against law. An honorable magistrate of that county had described the conduct of one party as at one time eminently useful; were they therefore to be banished? The governor of the county had described the other party, as suffering most cruel persecutions without having committed any crimes; were they to be banished? In short if there be there, as is generally represented, a religious feud countenanced or connived at by the upper orders, some favouring one sect some the other, it would be the greatest cruelty on the lower orders, without any amnesty to inflict that law upon them.

The two great amendments he proposed, were the addition of a jury and amnesty, under certain restrictions. A principal advantage from adding a jury would be, not only that it would better ensure justice being done,
but

but would also satisfy the people that it was done. When a man was condemned by his peers, the people might lament, but they never murmured. They all went away satisfied, that he had had a fair trial. They went away satisfied with that and those laws, which secured to them so impartial a tribunal, and such an open and deliberate adjudication. They went away satisfied that they lived in a free country, and they felt an elevated gratitude for that order of things, where the wealthiest noble, and the poorest peasant were alike amenable to the same laws, and received equal attention and justice, when accused of any breach of them.* But pass this law, and the triumph of the poor man was at an end. He would then see that those institutions, which were represented as so sacred, that they could never be violated, might be thus deposed, and without any process, without any form of trial, without any regular judge or jury, he might, on the warrant of two magistrates, be torn from the bosom of his family, and sent on board the fleet—for what? not for being a Defender, or any way connected with Defenders, but for being a little too late or a little too early, in going in or coming out of his hovel. Gentlemen talked of the mischief of inflaming the people, but he would tell them, that one such act unjustly done would inflame them more than what could be said in that house for ages. It was not what they might say, but what they were going to empower others to do, that would inflame them.

Was it wise then to risk the abuse of such powers at such a time? They knew not what turn that extraordinary war might take, or whither its operations might tend before or after its conclusion. The prospect of peace seemed as distant as it did the first day. France, whatever she might be suffering in external and distant parts, was still gaining strength at home. Brabant had been added to her—Holland has been added to her—Spain was at her feet—Her armies were over-running Italy—Her finances were deranged, but her pecuniary resources were not annihilated; in men and arms she was inexhaustible. What should this teach the gentlemen of Ireland—but to conciliate, as well as to chastise—to reclaim by amnesty those who were reclaimable, and to punish by just and open law those who were not. It was thus, they would produce content and solidity at home, while other king-

* It has been before observed, that Sir John Davies, and Sir Edward Coke both allowed this prominent disposition in the Irish character to be satisfied with impartial justice, even should it be against themselves. 1 Vol. p. 22.

doms were shaken to their foundations. Let the war then move in what direction it might, they should shew them that their people might be contented and attached, and that they need not fear its issue.

Mr. Pelham spoke against the recommitment of the bill, as did several leading gentlemen on the Treasury Bench, such as Sir John Parnell, Mr. Mason, Sir Henry Cavendish, Mr. M. Beresford, and others of inferior note. Not one of them attempted to contradict or even attenuate the guilt of the Peep of Day boys or Orange Men of Armagh. This debate in fact is the chief historical source of information for the true nature of the Armagh persecution. Suppression of the truth on one hand, the fear of publishing it on the other, confusion, exaggeration, and violence on all sides have left little else upon the subject, that can be credited. Mr. George Ponsonby, in speaking upon the nature of those disturbances in reply to the gentlemen of the ministerial side of the house, whose sole argument was, that it was unnecessary to take any particular notice of the county of Armagh, because the existing laws were sufficient to punish the crimes, by which that country was disgraced, he answered, that the enormities, which had been declared by the governor of that county (Lord Viscount Gosford) to have been committed, and which the governor himself emphatically said, went beyond any enormities, which ever disgraced any country, were such as the existing laws were not calculated fully to reach; they were of that kind, that a fair and impartial government should be glad to catch at every opportunity to punish or prevent them. If administration were sincere in a wish to protect the unfortunate sufferer in that county, as they were to punish the offenders in other parts, they could not hesitate for a moment to adopt the amendment. There was as yet no good reason for resorting to the dangerous and desperate remedy of that bill.—There then were only five counties disturbed, and even in those counties the disturbances had much abated within the last months.*

Sir

* 16 Parl. Deb. p. 166. Mr. Ponsonby alluding to himself concluded his speech by disclaiming any party motive in his present conduct; he did not oppose the bill, but those two clauses of it which he thought no friend to the liberty or constitution of Ireland could support, and which for himself he would never agree to. Had he been influenced by party views, and wished to serve the cause of administration, he would have espoused the cause of the insurgents, for they were their best friends.

Here Mr. Ponsonby reprobated the conduct of the disorderly part of the people, who, while a con-

Sir John Parnell complimented Mr. Ponsonby on the manly and open manner, in which he had spoken those sentiments, which every man must feel on the conduct of the insurgents. After a very warm debate the question was negatived without a division. No other question of an interesting nature was debated in this session. On the 24th of March the money bills were presented,* and on the 15th of April the parliament was prorogued. His excellency's speech from the throne, besides the usual topics on such occasions, adverted to the steps taken by his majesty for setting on foot a negotiation for a general peace, if the enemy should be disposed to enter into such a negotiation on grounds consistent with the safety, honor, and interest of his majesty's kingdoms and of his allies. He confided that the vigorous measures they had adopted for the suppression of insurrection and outrage,

stitutional opposition were obtaining for them a place bill, a pension bill, a responsibility bill, and other useful measures, had provided for themselves a gunpowder bill, which deprived the freeman of his arms; a convention bill, which stopped the voice of the people, and brought liberty to almost its last gasp; and now had enabled them to bring forward this measure, which, were it permanent, would be the grave of the constitution.

* The following was the speaker's speech at the bar of the House of Lords. (*16 Parl. Deb. p. 211*). "I should feel a pride in repeating the sentiments of loyalty, which direct the commons in all their deliberations, but the bills of supply which they now offer, declare it more effectually, than it is in the power of any language to express.

"We are part of the empire; we will stand or fall with Britain; it is our repeated determined resolution, and this nation will exert all its powers, and will call forth all its resources to support with her the common cause, to uphold the safety of the land, the religion and the constitution, against the overthrow which the present unprovoked and unexampled war attempts to threaten them with.

"Peace is an object most devoutly to be wished, but an insecure peace is only a smothered war; for a lasting and honorable one (and none can be lasting that is not honorable) we look to the powerful impressions which the abundant resources of the empire, the vigour of his majesty's exertions, and the cordial co-operation of all his subjects, must make on the common enemy.

"We have accordingly, with a unanimous voice, granted supplies to the utmost desire expressed by his majesty's ministers, and in doing so we look back with great satisfaction to the energy, wisdom, and œconomy, with which the very liberal supplies of the last session have been administered under your excellency's government. The defence of the kingdom has had due attention paid to it. The spirit of insurrection has been vigorously suppressed wherever it has appeared, and we have the strongest hope from the vigilance, the firmness and conciliating moderation, which have marked your excellency's conduct since your arrival in this kingdom, that under the additional powers, with which the laws of this session will have armed the magistracy, it will be totally and speedily subdued."

and

and the wise provisions they had made for preventing the extension of similar offences, would have the most salutary effects; that the new regulation of licences under the superintendence of magistrates, would tend to promote tranquillity and sobriety. The establishment of more frequent sessions of the peace would afford an easy and expeditious administration of justice in the different districts throughout the kingdom. The liberal increase of the salaries of the judges, and the alteration of the civil bill jurisdiction, for the convenience of the lower ranks of the people, would ensure the constant and regular attention of his majesty's judges to the civil and criminal business, that would remain to be done on the circuits.

The very wide difference of opinion upon the political system of governing Ireland was not confined to the division of the treasury and opposition benches in parliament. The warfare of sentiment was wider and more violent out of doors. The numbers which adhered to the different parties were more than proportionally in the inverse ratio of the majority and minority in the House of Commons. An acrimonious and abusive pamphlet was written by one of the secretaries of the castle, though published anonymously, severely reflecting upon Mr. Grattan and Earl Fitzwilliam. The notice and indignation, which this pamphlet produced in the opposite parties, gave it notoriety, consequence and effect; and the daily papers teemed with panegyrics and invectives according to the opposite dispositions, or rather the engagements of their proprietors. So much had been said, and not contradicted in parliament concerning the outrageous persecutions of the county of Armagh, that it was found adviseable to endeavour to soften down the public indignation, which had been too unequivocally expressed, not to create alarm at the castle. In the Spring of this year, the public believed, (whether rightly or wrongly, the effect was the same) that about 5000 (some say 7000) Catholics had been forced or burned out of the county of Armagh, and that the ferocious banditti, who had expelled them had been encouraged, connived at, countenanced, instigated, or protected by the government. At the Lent assizes of the year 1796* the sheriff, governor, and
grand

* It must appear more than singular to the impartial observer, that this address contains not one syllable of reference to the appropriate outrages of that county, viz. religious feuds and rancour, conflagration, devastation and extermination.

County of Armagh.

At a meeting of the high sheriff, governor, grand jury, and magistrates of the county of Armagh,
4 B 2
assembled

grand jury of the county of Armagh published an address and resolutions, calculated to do away the impressions generally received by the public upon the

assembled at the Lent assizes, 1796, the following address and resolutions were unanimously agreed to :

“ To his Excellency JOHN JEFFREYS, EARL CAMDEN, Lord Lieutenant-General, and General
“ Governor of Ireland, &c. &c.

“ The unanimous Address of the Sheriff, Governor, Grand Jury, and Magistrates of the County of
“ Armagh, assembled at Lent Assizes, 1796.

“ DEEPLY impressed with the attention which your excellency has been pleased to shew to this
“ county, and sensible of the readiness with which military aid has been afforded, whenever it has
“ been required, on occasion of the disturbances that in some places have unfortunately prevailed,
“ we return your excellency our warmest acknowledgments, and beg leave to express the firmest
“ confidence in the wisdom and energy of your excellency's government.

“ We have seen with the deepest regret the outrages, which for some time past have disturbed
“ the peace, and interrupted the industry of this prosperous county—and as the grand jury of the
“ county have always discharged their duty with that rigorous and impartial justice, which is cal-
“ culated to protect the person and the property of all its inhabitants of every description, so we
“ shall continue to use our utmost exertions to punish offenders of every denomination.

“ We trust that the peace of the county will in consequence of the proceedings at this assizes, be
“ restored universally—but should that unfortunately not be the case, we beg leave to assure your
“ excellency that we must feel it to be our duty, and the duty of all the other magistrates of the
“ county, to resort to immediate proceedings under the law of the present session of parliament,
“ however much we must lament the unusual rigor, which it will impose upon offenders, and how-
“ ever much we must deplore the burthens as well as the disgrace, which such measures must ne-
“ cessarily impose upon the county.

“ JOHN OGLE, sheriff.

“ GOSFORD, governor.

“ CAULFIELD, foreman, for self and fellow-jurors.”

Resolved, That the thanks of the grand jury be given to our high sheriff, for the care which he has taken in making returns of the very enlightened and dispassionate juries that have attended, and for his very proper conduct throughout this assizes.

Resolved, That the thanks of the grand jury be given to the right honorable the attorney general, for the very able speech in which he addressed the county, for the candor and unwearied exertion with which he has conducted the prosecutions at this assizes, and for his readiness in communicating with the grand jury on every occasion, when applied to.

The above address being presented to his excellency the lord lieutenant, he was pleased to return the following answer :

“ I RETURN my most sincere thanks to the sheriff, governor, grand jury, and magistrates of
“ the county of Armagh for the address which has been presented to me.

“ It

the ferocious outrages of those exterminators. Their annunciation of impartial justice, and a resolution to punish offenders of every denomination, was rather unseasonable, when there remained no longer any of one denomination to commit outrages upon, or to retaliate injuries.

*In the summer of 1796, great numbers of persons, principally from the
province

“ It gives me the greatest satisfaction to observe the anxious solicitude that has appeared during
“ the course of the last assizes, amongst all descriptions of persons, to endeavour to extinguish that
“ spirit of outrage, which has existed within your county for some time past. I lament that those
“ endeavours have not hitherto proved totally successful, but I look forward with confidence to the
“ expectation that a continuation of that temper and unanimity which have appeared at the late
“ assizes, may render it unnecessary to recur to those powers that have been given by the wisdom
“ and energy of parliament, which powers I trust will be called for with caution, but when granted
“ will be used with effect.”

* Report of Secret Committee Com. Journ. Appendix DCCCXXIX. The above quoted Memoir (p. 5) gives the following detailed account of the progress of the union at this period:—
“ While they were almost entirely confined to the north, but increasing rapidly there, the insurrection bill was passed in the beginning of the year 1796, augmenting the penalties upon administering unlawful oaths, or solemn obligations, even to death: but death had ceased to alarm
“ men who began to think it was to be encountered in their country's cause. The statute remained
“ an absolute dead letter, and the numbers of the body augmented beyond belief.

“ To the Armagh persecution is the union of Irishmen most exceedingly indebted. The persons
“ and properties of the wretched Catholics of that county were exposed to the merciless attacks of
“ an Orange faction, which was certainly in many instances uncontrolled by the justices of peace,
“ and claimed to be in all supported by government. When these men found that illegal acts of
“ magistrates were indemnified by occasional statutes, and the courts of justice shut against them
“ by parliamentary barriers, they began to think they had no refuge but in joining the union.
“ Their dispositions so to do, were much increased by finding the Presbyterians of Belfast especially step forward to espouse their cause, and succour their distress. We will here remark, once
“ for all, what we most solemnly aver, that wherever the Orange system was introduced, particularly in Catholic counties, it was uniformly observed, that the numbers of United Irishmen
“ increased most astonishingly. The alarm which an Orange lodge excited among the Catholics,
“ made them look for refuge by joining together in the united system; and as their number was
“ always greater than that of bigotted Protestants, our harvest was ten-fold. At the same time that
“ we mention this circumstance, we must confess, and must deeply regret, that it excited a mutual
“ acrimony and vindictive spirit, which was peculiarly opposite to the interest, and abhorrent to the
“ feelings of the United Irishmen, and has lately manifested itself, we hear, into outrages of so
“ much horror.

“ About the middle of 1796, a meeting of the executive took place, more important in its discussions and its consequences, than any that had preceded it; as such, we have thought ourselves
“ bound to give an account of it with the most perfect frankness, and more than ordinary precision.
“ sion.

province of Ulster, had inrolled themselves in that society, About the same period a direct communication had been opened by the heads of the party with

“ fion. This meeting took place in consequence of a letter from one of the society, who had emi-
 “ grated on account of political opinions: it mentioned, that the state of the country had been
 “ represented to the government of France in so favorable a point of view, as to induce them to
 “ resolve upon invading Ireland, for the purpose of enabling it to separate itself from Great Britain.
 “ On this solemn and important occasion, a serious review was taken of the state of the Irish na-
 “ tion at that period: it was observed, that a desperate ferment existed in the public mind; a
 “ resolution in favor of a parliamentary reform had indeed been passed early in 1793, by the House
 “ of Commons; but after it had been frustrated by several successive adjournments, all hope of its
 “ attainment was vanished, and its friends every where proscribed, the volunteers were put down,
 “ all power of meeting by delegation for any political purpose, the mode in which it was most usual
 “ and expedient to co-operate on any subject of importance, was taken away at the same time.
 “ The provocations of the year 1794, the recall of Lord Fitzwilliam, and the re-assumption of coer-
 “ cive measures that followed it, were strongly dwelt on: the county of Armagh had been long
 “ desolated by two contending factions, agreeing only in one thing, an opinion, that most of the
 “ active magistrates in that county treated one party with the most fostering kindness, and the other
 “ with the most rigorous persecution. It was stated, that so marked a partiality exasperated the
 “ sufferers, and those who sympathized in their misfortunes. It was urged with indignation, that
 “ notwithstanding the greatness of the military establishment in Ireland, and its having been able
 “ to suppress the Defenders in various counties, it was not able, or was not employed to suppress
 “ these outrages in that county, which drove seven thousand persons from their native dwellings.
 “ The magistrates, who took no steps against the Orange men, were said to have overleaped the
 “ boundaries of law to pursue and punish the Defenders. The government seemed to take upon
 “ themselves those injuries by the indemnity act, and even honored the violators; and by the insur-
 “ rection act, which enabled the same magistrates, if they chose, under colour of law, to act anew
 “ the same abominations. Nothing, it was contended, could more justly excite the spirit of resist-
 “ ance, and determine men to appeal to arms, than the insurrection act; it punished with death
 “ the administering of oaths, which, in their opinion, were calculated for the most virtuous and
 “ honorable purposes. The power of proclaiming counties, and quieting them by breaking open
 “ the cabins of the peasants between sun-set and sun-rise, by seizing the inmates, and sending them
 “ on board tenders without the ordinary interposition of a trial by jury, had, it was alleged, irritated
 “ beyond endurance the minds of the reflecting, and the feelings of the unthinking inhabitants of
 “ that province. It was contended, that even according to the constitution and example of 1688,
 “ when the protection of the constituted authorities was drawn from the subject, allegiance, the re-
 “ ciprocal duty ceased to bind; when the people were not redressed, they had a right to resist, and
 “ were free to seek for allies wherever they were to be found. The English revolutionists of 1688
 “ called in the aid of a foreign republic to overthrow their oppressors. There had sprung up in our
 “ own time a much more mighty republic, which, by its offers of assistance to break the chains of
 “ slavery, had drawn on itself a war with the enemies of our freedom, and now particularly ten-
 “ dered

with the enemy: and French assistance was solicited and promised to be speedily sent to aid the disaffected in that kingdom. It appears sufficiently clear that some of the heads of the union at this time had fully conceived the execrable design of attempting to effectuate a total separation from Great Britain, and consequently the necessary overthrow of the existing government. But the extent of these traitorous views was cautiously suppressed from the multitude, whom they hitherto led as the blind instruments of their nefarious project, under the plausible avowal of uniting only for the purposes of obtaining Catholic emancipation, and full and equal representation in parliament. The determination, with which government seemed in the last session of parliament to have extinguished every prospect of attaining either of those two objects, and the system of coercion and rigor which they had now avowedly adopted, were used by the designing heads of the union as the most efficient means to propagate disaffection, to ulcerate the popular forebodings, to bring into contempt the Protestant ascendancy, and to work up the disappointment, despair and licentiousness of the multitude, into civil and religious enthusiasm for effecting those two great objects, from the want of which they were taught to derive the sum total of their wretchedness. It had been observed in parliament by some of the most respectable country gentlemen, that such a system tended more to inflame than heal. No means of fascination and seduction were omitted to rivet the passions of the multitude to the attainment of emancipation and reform, who all gloried in their efforts to obtain these two points: and thus engaged, they became ductile to the ulterior views of their traitorous conductors. It is, however, to be remarked, that at this time few of the most dangerous of the rebels* were acting with the members of the union.

“ dered us its aid. These arguments prevailed, and it was resolved to employ the proffered assistance for the purpose of separation. We were aware it was suspected that negotiations between the United Irishmen and the French were carried on at an earlier period than that now alluded to, but we solemnly declare such suspicion was ill-founded. In consequence of this determination of the executive, an agent was dispatched to the French Directory, who acquainted them with it, stated the dispositions of the people, and the measures which caused them: he received fresh assurances that the succours should be sent, as soon as the armament could be got ready.”

* In the memoir of O'Connor, Emmett, and M'Nevin, they say (p. 9) “ None of us were members of the united system until September or October in the year 1796.” Mr. T. W. Tone had fled the country in the beginning of 1795, upon suspicion of his being implicated in the treason of the Rev. Mr. Jackson, who was tried for high treason and found guilty on the 23d of April,

* With a view of being prepared as much as possible to co-operate with the enemy then expected, and in order to counteract the effect of the armed af-

April, 1795 : and when he was called up to receive sentence on the 30th of April, he died in court of the poison he had previously taken. Mr. Hamilton Rowan about the same time having been tried, convicted, and sentenced to two years imprisonment for sedition, escaped out of prison to the continent : and Mr. Napper Tandy having been indicted for high treason about the same time, was proceeding to take his trial at Dundalk ; when he was met about twelve miles from that town by his attorney, who apprizing him of the dead weight of evidence against him, he returned to Dublin, and fled also to the continent.

* Report of the Secret Committee XVII. Com. Jour. DCCCXXIX. The following account of the military organization is given in the before mentioned Memoir. “ The military organization had no existence until towards the latter end of 1796, and was as near as could be engrafted on the civil : in order to avoid giving alarm, it continued to conceal itself as much as possible under the usual denominations. The secretary of a society of twelve, was commonly the petty officer ; the delegate of five societies to a lower baronial, when the population required such an immediate step, was usually the captain, and the delegates from the lower to the upper baronial was usually the colonel. All officers to colonels up, were indispensably elected by those they were to command, but at that point the interference of the societies ceased, and every higher commission was in the appointment of the executive ; only as soon as sufficient numbers of regiments were organized in any county, the colonels were directed to transmit to the executive the names of three persons, fit, in their opinion, to act as adjutants general for that county, of those, the executive chose one ; and through this organ all military communications were made to the several counties ; in consequence of such arrangements not more than one of the executive need ever be committed with any county ; and that only to a person of his own choice from among the three. It so happened, that the same member was entitled to hold communications with several adjutants general, which still further diminished the risk to the executive : we refer to the amended printed constitution, where the military constitution without being named, is more correctly set forth, than we can give from memory. As to the manner in which these men were to be provided with arms and ammunition, every man who could afford it, was directed to provide himself with a musquet, bayonet, and as much ammunition as he could ; every other man with a pike, and if he were able a case of pistols ; but this, we apprehend, was not strictly adhered to. We have heard it said, that treasurers were appointed for raising money to purchase arms, but no such appointment was ever made, at least by the executive. Perhaps some private societies might have adopted such a measure.

“ In many instances the lower orders went about to private houses to search for arms ; this the executive constantly endeavoured to prevent, because they were unwilling to raise alarm in their adversaries, or let the members of their body acquire habits of plunder, and be confounded with robbers. They endeavoured to dissuade them from these acts, by representing to the people, that the arms would always be kept in better condition by the gentlemen than by them, and could be easily seized whenever necessary. In other respects our stores were in the arsenal in the castle, and the military depots throughout the country ; our supplies were in the treasury.

sociations

sociations of yeomanry, established in October 1796, directions were issued by the leaders to the societies, to form themselves into military bodies, and to be provided with arms and ammunition.

These directions were speedily obeyed, the societies assumed a military form, and it appears by the original papers, seized at Belfast in the month of April 1797, that their numbers at that period, in the province of Ulster alone, were stated to amount to nearly one hundred thousand men. That they were very largely supplied with fire-arms and pikes, that they had some cannon and ammunition, and were diligently employed in the study of military tactics; in short, that nothing was neglected by the party, which could enable them to take the field on the arrival of the enemy,* or whenever they might receive orders to that effect from their superior officers, whom they were bounden by oath to obey.

The report of the secret committee of the commons, continues to inform us, that in the summer of 1796, the outrages committed by a banditti, calling themselves Defenders,† in the counties of Roscommon, Leitrim, Longford,

* Memoir IX. “ In the autumn of 1796, it must be confessed, the reasons already alleged, and the initiations of the preceding summer in the North, had disposed us to a separation and republic, principally because we were hopeless, that a reform would ever be yielded to any peaceable exertion of the people. We cannot be accurate as to the progress either of the numbers or organization of the United Irishmen; it having been an invariable rule, to burn all the returns or other papers, after they ceased to be useful; we have no documents wherewith to refresh our memories, but we apprehend the report of the secret committee to be, in that case, sufficiently accurate, except that the numbers were always much greater than appeared by those reports; the documents on which they rely, only noticed those who went regularly into societies; but great numbers, perhaps at a rough guess, half as many were sworn to the test, who were prevented by private motives and local circumstances, from committing themselves in that way; we are, however, convinced, that the numbers of the whole body could not latterly be less than 500,000.

“ The returns from the different societies, and committees upwards, specified among other things, arms and ammunition; they were not originally included in them, nor were they introduced until after the passing the insurrection and indemnity acts, when the people began to be more than ever carried towards resistance, and were extremely irritated by the indemnified violations of law in the North. The returns also stated, sums of money having been collected; those sums were always very small, and applied towards the support of persons imprisoned on charges connected with the Union, and in conducting of their defences, any other expences were defrayed by occasional private subscriptions.”

† The purport of this part of the report appears historically incorrect: inasmuch at least as it
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ford, Meath, Westmeath and Kildare, together with a religious feud prevailing in the county of Armagh, induced the legislature to pass a temporary act of parliament, generally called the Insurrection Act, by which the lord lieutenant and council were enabled, upon the requisition of seven magistrates of any county, assembled at a sessions of the peace, to proclaim the whole or any part thereof, to be in a state of disturbance; within which limits this law, giving increased power to the magistracy, was to have operation.

Many districts in Ulster, in which outrages prevailed, occasioned by the active and persecuting spirit of the United Irishmen, were in the course of the winter of 1796, and spring of 1797, put under the provision of the act above mentioned; and the committee observed, that although where the law was put in force with activity by the magistrates, very beneficial consequences were found to result from it, yet the treason was then too deeply rooted to yield to that remedy.

Although it be true, as the committee has reported, that in the latter end of 1796, and the beginning of 1797, the loyal inhabitants of Ulster suffered most severely from the United Irishmen; that throughout the province, they were stripped of their arms: that the most horrid murders were perpetrated by large bodies of men in open day, and that it became nearly impossible to

appears and intends to identify the cause of the Union and the Defenders in the year 1796. The Memoir gives this candid and apparently true account of the only connection, which at that time existed between them. "Defenderism has been supposed to be the origin of the modern societies of United Irishmen: this is undoubtedly either a mistake or a misrepresentation; we solemnly declare, that there was no connexion between them and the united Irish, as far as we know, except what follows:

"After the Defenders had spread into different counties, they manifested a rooted but unlightened aversion, among other things, to the same grievances, that were complained of by the Union. They were composed almost entirely of Catholics, and those of the lowest order, who, through a false confidence, were risking themselves, and the attainment of redress by premature and unsystematic insurrection. In the North they were also engaged in an acrimonious and bloody struggle with an opposite faction, called Peep of Day Boys. The advantage of reconciling these two misguided parties, of joining them in the Union, and so turning them from any views they might have exclusively religious, and of restraining them from employing a mutual destructive exertion of force, most powerfully struck the minds of several United Irishmen. For that purpose, many of them in the northern counties went among both, but particularly the Defenders, joined with them, shewed them the superiority of the union system, and gradually, while government was endeavouring to quell them by force, melted them down into the United Irish body. This rendered their conduct infinitely more orderly, and less suspicious to government."

bring

bring the offenders to justice, from the inevitable destruction, that awaited the witnesses or jurors, who dared to perform their duty: yet was it also true, that this species of barbarous outrage did not exist in the county of Armagh, and a part of Louth, but that another species of outrage from the Orangemen did there exist, of which the report is wholly silent. Historical justice requires us also to notice a most material fact asserted in the report of the lords, which does not appear to be founded in the same species of evidence, either by confession or voucher, upon which most of the facts contained in the report of the commons had been supported. The lords fully confirmed the report of the commons, and having received and investigated such further evidence as they thought in prudence they were called upon to examine, had come to an unanimous resolution, immediately to report that they were fully satisfied and convinced, from the evidence laid before them, that a traiterous and alarming conspiracy has been formed, and that sundry acts had been done in pursuance thereof by certain affiliated societies and persons in different parts of the kingdom, calling themselves United Irishmen, for the subversion of the established laws and constitution, and the introduction of a system of anarchy, plunder and confusion, similar to that which had fatally prevailed in France. That they thought it necessary further to report, that it appeared distinctly to them that such a system was the first and fundamental object of these societies, at their original institution in the summer of the year 1791, and that the attainment of what were called parliamentary reform and Catholic emancipation were and continued to be holden out by them merely as a pretence for their associations, and with a view to seduce persons, who were not apprized of their traiterous designs, to unite with them. This was a clear avowal, that all the members of the union were not at that time apprized of the traiterous designs of some of their leaders. For it is unquestionable, that numerous individuals were engaged as members of the union, who had no treason in their minds or hearts. The term affiliated societies was too extensive to be applied to those who were guilty at that time of treason. And therefore, the committee a little after applied, as the truth was, the guilt of uniting with the Defenders to the leaders and directors of their societies. For it had further appeared to them, that the leaders and directors of these associations then were and had been for some time past anxiously engaged in uniting with them a class of men, who had formerly disturbed the peace of this country by acts of outrage, robbery and murder,

under the appellation of Defenders, and they had reason to apprehend, that in a certain degree they had succeeded. In addition to the facts contained in the report of the commons, they found it necessary to state, that it had appeared distinctly and unequivocally to them, that a traiterous correspondence and communication had been carried on between the leaders and directors of the societies of the United Irishmen and the executive directory of the French Republic; the period at which that correspondence was proved to have taken place, had appeared to have been between the month of June, 1795, and the month of January, 1796, and the means by which it was carried on in that instant, had been fully proved; and it had also appeared to their committee, that in the event of success on the part of those conspirators, it had been decided, that all persons who from their principles or situation might be deemed inimical to the conspiracy, should be massacred: the first proscribed list, it had appeared to their committee, had been calculated by one of their leaders at thirty thousand persons.

It cannot elude the observation of every candid man, who considers the nature and progress of that horrible rebellion, which afterwards broke out openly in the year 1798, that the greater part of the individuals were unfortunately involved in it, by imperceptible gradation, by deception, art, malice, menace, or intimidation of the leaders and directors. The committee of the lords charged the affiliated societies of United Irishmen generally with the treason, and they attempted only to prove it against their leaders and directors in the particular instances of uniting with the defenders and French Republicans. Too much guilt alas attached upon a numerous part of that nation, to excite a wish in the most savage breast to aggravate the criminality or extend the treason. Some individuals, who can only measure their own loyalty by the acrimony, with which they calumniate their country, have upon the strength of this report, specifically charged the United Irishmen with holding regular committees of assassination. But no evidence whatever is offered by the lords even to support their loose inuendo or charge of systematic assassination. The private murders, though numerous and bloody, rather rebut than substantiate the charge of any organised system of that atrocious nature.*

As

* Mem. p. 7. " It has been alleged against the United Irishmen, that they established a system of assassination. Nothing has ever been imputed to them, that we feel more pleasure in being able

As the summer advanced, the public fever was quickened. Many outrages of the defenders were punished in a most unwarrantable manner upon innocent untried persons by the military : upon mere suspicion or absence of a landlord, they burnt houses, they often maimed, and in some instances murdered the natives, who unfortunately inhabited the districts, into which they were sent. Nothing so strongly tends to irritate the popular mind, as the commission of crimes under the colour of authority. In one instance a certain colonel was at the assizes of Armagh tried and found guilty of murdering a Mr. Lucas ; upon his receiving sentence, he produced his majesty's pardon, and was instantly liberated. This circumstance greatly irritated the people. The many barbarities committed by the Orangemen in Armagh and Down, if not with connivance,* at least with impunity, greatly inflamed the
irritation

able to disavow. In such immense numbers as were to be found in that body, although uniformity of system may have given a wonderful uniformity of action, yet it is unfair and unjust to charge the whole body with the vices of a few of its members : individual grievances produced individual resentments, and the meeting of many sufferers in the same way frequently caused them to concur in the same resolutions. It appears, indeed, by some trials, that a baronial once took that subject into consideration ; but it was manifest, that it was taken up by them as individuals, whose principles, as it afterwards appeared, were not repugnant to the act. A committee of assassination has been much talked of ; we have heard persons mentioned as members of it, whom we know, from the most private and confidential observations, to be utterly abhorrent from that crime. We solemnly declare, we believe that such a committee never existed. We most solemnly aver, it never was with the cognizance of a part of the union. We also declare, that in no communication from those, who were placed at the head of the United Irishmen, to the rest of that body, and in no official paper was assassination ever inculcated, but frequently and fervently reprobated. It was considered by them with horror, on account of its criminality, and with personal dread, because it would render ferocious the minds of men, in whose hands their lives were placed, most particularly placed ; inasmuch as between them and the rest of that body were they out of the protection of the law. In proof of this assertion, we would beg leave to refer to a sketch of a publication, which we believe was seized among the papers of one of us, at the time of his arrest, and which it was intended should appear, if the paper to which it alluded had not been discontinued. One other consideration, which we intreat may not offend, will, we hope, be decisive. If such committee had existed, and if the men at the head of the United Irishmen had thought assassination a justifiable mode of attaining their ends, and had been capable of encouraging such atrocity, possessed as they were of wide-spread means of acting, and powerful control over men, who, it is now manifest, held the loss of life in utter contempt, the poignard would have been directed, not against such petty objects as an obnoxious county magistrate, or an informer."

* Three Orangemen voluntarily made oath before a magistrate of the county of Down and Armagh, that they met in committees ; amongst whom were some members of parliament, who gave these

irritation of the opposite party, which throughout the nation was by far the more numerous. I forbear to retail the particular outrages, lest malice should misrepresent their statement, as a justification of rebellion. In the autumn of this year government greatly encouraged the formation of different armed corps,* particularly of yeomanry, in imitation of those in England. The
dread

these people money, and promised they should not suffer for any act they might commit; and pledged themselves, that they should hereafter be provided for under the auspices of government. The magistrate wrote to the secretary of state, enquiring of him how he should act in these critical times; that hitherto he had preserved peace on his large estate, but wished to know how he should act in future; that if it were necessary for the preservation of the present system for him to connive at or encourage the Orangemen in their depredations, he said, as a man he knew his duty: if it were not necessary, he hoped the magistrates of the county at large would be made responsible, and be compelled to act against these depredators. That letter was written in consequence of a large meeting of Orangemen intended to be convened in about ten days after. About the same time a number of delegates from the Orangemen met in the town of Armagh, and entered into resolutions, which they published: in these resolutions they recommended to the gentlemen of fortune to open a subscription, declaring, "That the two guineas per man allowed them by government was not " sufficient to purchase clothes and accoutrements."

* These corps, which afterwards proved highly serviceable to the state, were at first strongly disliked and opposed by numbers: all those of course were against them, who entertained any real evil designs against the government: those who had *bona fide* united for the purposes of attaining reform and emancipation conceived, that they were to be dragooned out of their purposes: and the Catholics not being generally admitted into these corps, resented their rejection as an invidious distinction, tending to question their loyalty and sincerity in their country's cause. They accordingly waited on Mr. Pelham for leave to raise a Catholic corps, but were told, that if they chose they might join the corps then raising by their Protestant fellow subjects. Some few in fact did; but the shyness and reluctance, with which Catholics were admitted into the Protestant corps of yeomanry, kept most from joining them. Certain it is also, that the antiministerial party discouraged them at the time, as appears from party publications of those days. One of them spoke thus: "The manner, in which administration are about to prepare a force in this kingdom is exceeding " suspicious. Were the liberties of the nation to be destroyed, its independence, or imperial ex- " istence to be voted away, the plan to be acted upon could be no other than that which develops " itself. In the metropolis the *canaille de la cour* only are to be armed; we are to have armed pen- " sioners, armed excisemen, armed revenue officers, from the commissioner to the gauger; armed " contractors, armed clerks from all the public offices; every person in the court, about the court, " or deriving from the court, is to be armed. In the country our little great men, known at " court, and none others, are to be armed; their parasites and retainers are to be armed, their do- " mestics are to be armed, their devoted tenants are to be armed, and this pye-bald mass of incon- " gruous particles, this disjointed piece of patchwork, a just emblem of folly, weakness, and ridi- " cule, is to be called Yeomanry.

" See,

dread of a French invasion was the ostensible reason for embodying these corps. Nothing however gave more sanction and favour to them with the public, than the formation of the lawyer's corps. A general meeting of the bar was holden on the 14th of September, 1796, at which it was resolved, that they held it expedient, with the permission of government, to form an armed association for the defence of the kingdom. Great exertions were at this time made to fester the forebodings of the Catholics, and to inflame the differences between the Protestants and them. Complaints were made in the popular prints* of those in the pay of government for their open endeavours
to

“ See, then, in what situation we will eventually find ourselves. All the partizans of corrupt influence, all those whose interest it is to continue and multiply the abuses of our political system, will have arms in their hands. All those who rely upon their own independent properties, or upon their own industry, the people whom it has become of late the fashion to asperse, will be naked. Thus naked, the people will stand like a fool in the middle, surrounded by a treble army, an army of placemen and pensioners, a mercenary standing army, and an army of militia, officered by the court.”

* The Dublin Evening Post of the 24th of September, 1796, contained the following observations, which I copy, not to prove the truth or justness, but to shew the state and disposition of the public mind at that period. “ The most severe stroke made against the character and conduct of the viceroy, as a moral man and first magistrate of a free people, who ‘ ought not to hold the sword in vain,’ nor to exercise it *partially*, has been in Faulkner’s Journal of this day. That hireling print is undeniably in the pay of his lordship’s administration; and what administration permits, it is supposed to prompt or patronize. In that print, the blind fury of the banditti, which usurps and disgraces the name of *Orange* in the north, is applauded, and all their bloody excesses justified. Murder in all its horrid forms, assassinations in cold blood, the mutilation of members without respect to age or sex, the firing of whole hamlets, so that when the inhabitants have been looked after, nothing but their ashes were to be found; the atrocious excursions of furious hordes, armed with sword, fire, and faggot, to exterminate a people, for presuming to obey the divine command, written by the finger of God himself, ‘ Honor thy father and thy mother,’ and walking in the religion, which seemed good in their eyes. These are the flagitious enormities, which attract the mercenary applause of Faulkner’s Journal, the literary prop of the Camden administration; these are favorite themes, upon which it dilates with the copiousness of a full heart. O shame! where is thy blush?”

“ The same print, by insinuation, would visit the disturbances, which have taken place in Louth, Meath, Monaghan, Cavan, Westmeath, Roscommon, Longford, Leitrim, Sligo, Limerick, Wexford, and Dublin, upon the magistrates of those counties. The suppression of nocturnal insurrections in these districts is a full vindication of these magistrates. The violence of the other insurrection, and the impunity with which it rages in the north, leave the magistrates in that quarter without excuse. Recent decisions in our courts prove, that they deserve punishment,
“ and

to blow up these nearly smothered embers into a fresh flame of rancour, animosity, and perpetual discord. The unchecked and unpunished persecutions of the Catholics in the county of Armagh was the never-ceasing theme of popular declamation: ministers both in and out of parliament rebutted the charge of connivance, approbation, and encouragement, by flat and solemn denials. It was objected to the administration, that whilst they proclaimed the houghing of a bullock in the south, they smothered in silence the murder and proscription of hundreds of human beings in the north: that they were vigilant to make every forcible possession out of the county of Armagh the subject of a proclamation, whilst within that county they winked at the perpetration of the most atrocious crimes. The popular party, which fought nothing so eagerly as to disgust and inflame the public mind against the Castle, justified these charges by asserting, what was certainly true, though perhaps otherwise intended by government, that no statute, no proclamation, no resolutions of public bodies, had specified or punished the particular crimes of the Orangemen in Armagh, that no perpetrators of them had been punished, that not a single magistrate had been stricken off the commission, though many were generally believed to have connived at and encouraged those outrages: that several were rewarded by commands in the yeomanry corps, and otherwise favored by government. Whatever the real conduct of government were, with reference to the disturbances in Armagh, the partiality of that county for Mr. Pelham the secretary, and the then well known intention of returning that gentleman with Dr. Duigenan for the borough of Armagh in the ensuing parliament, coupled with other reports, riveted in the minds of the great mass of the people the firmest conviction, that the impunity of those fanatic exterminators of Armagh found countenance and support from the seat of civil and ecclesiastical power. Already had the reports of a general election brought forth many candidates for the counties, and the few open boroughs that admitted of election, to address their constitu-

“ and are themselves accomplices in the crimes, which it is their duty as magistrates, as men, and
 “ as Christians, to prevent. It is silly and impudent to say, that *Defenders* have advocates in this
 “ paper. Every rational man must abhor the practices of those unfortunate misguided people.
 “ But there are shades in guilt; and guilt of a deeper and fouler stain, baseness more black and
 “ bloody never appalled the eye of man, than that which stalks in the counties of Armagh and
 “ Down, however it may be hailed as the good genius of the country, by that literary dæmon of
 “ the court, *Faulkner's Journal*.”

ents.

ents. A more unequivocal test of the prevailing principles in those particular districts cannot be resorted to, than the addresses, in which the candidates assume merit in the eyes of what they conceive and wish to be the majority. Thus the congenial opposition given by Mr. Pelham and Dr. Duigenan to the question of Catholic emancipation, recommended them to the borough of Armagh: thus a contrary spirit of equal toleration endeared Colonel (now Lord) Hutchinson* to the city of Cork. The early meeting of the parliament, the uncertainty of its duration, the importance of the expected debates, the progress of organization with the United Irishmen, their hopes of French succours, others dread of French invasion, the increased vigilance of government, and their new exertions to tranquillize Armagh, all tended in different ways to abate for the moment the heat of the public fever.

The parliament met on the 13th of October, 1796, when the lord lieutenant in his speech from the throne informed them, that his majesty had required their attendance thus early in parliament in consequence of the enemy's threatening a descent upon that kingdom and Great Britain: he appealed to and confided in the spirit, loyalty, and zeal of his faithful people of Ireland to repel such an attack: he apprized them of his majesty's intention to send a person to Paris to treat for a peace: informed them of the

* In his address to the electors of Cork on the 6th of October, 1796, amongst other matters, this gentleman, whose gallant conduct his sovereign has since rewarded with a peerage, thus accosted his constituents after the usual introductory compliments. "It would be ridiculous in me to make you a vain display, and an idle pageantry of my loyalty, which no man has ever presumed to doubt or deny. Brought up in the army almost from my infancy, and now a general officer in the king's service, I must be loyal from duty, interest, affection, habit, and feeling; it would be too late for me to desert that cause, for which I have fought, and for which I am ready to die.

"I too love and revere our glorious constitution; I have studied and endeavoured to comprehend its principles, and have yet to learn that they tend to exclusion or intolerance. Sure I am, that the representation of all freehold property is the basis upon which it is erected; and that every departure from this its vital principle, is a violation of that constitution, which will be most applauded by those who understand it best. To unite all sects in one common comprehension, to consolidate the nation in order to give security to the people, strength to the empire, and dignity to the crown, has ever been the first object of my political life. These were my sentiments open and avowed long before I had the honor of representing you in parliament. Your own experience has proved, that they were not founded in error; you must have uniformly observed, that the prosperity of the country has increased in direct proportion with the relaxation of the penal code; and you must be convinced, that the circumstances of the times, and the situation of surrounding Europe, imperiously require the union of all the inhabitants of this island."

hostile disposition of Spain, and congratulated with them upon our successes in the West Indies, and the steady and dignified conduct of the emperor, and the intrepidity and spirit of the Austrian forces under the Archduke Charles, which inspired a well-grounded confidence of obtaining a peace. He trusted to the liberality of the commons for the supplies. He then adverted to the expediency of the vigorous measures of the last parliament, which appeared by the subsiding in great measure of those outrages, which they were intended to suppress. His excellency now for the first time took tender and oblique notice of the disturbances of Armagh. * “ I have however to lament, that “ in one part of the country good order has not yet been entirely restored ; “ and that in other districts a treasonable system of secret confederation, by the “ administering of illegal oaths, still continues, although no means within the “ reach of government have been left untried to counteract it.”

† Mr. Grattan objected to the speech. It contained no reconciling matter, no expectation of commercial benefits, and did in a great measure bespeak a false confidence in our resources both in commerce and revenue.

He lamented extremely, that the outrages against the Catholics in the north had been so slightly dwelt on. He could not conceive that government, with all the powers it now possessed, should not have been able to quiet that part of Ireland ; that he feared the mob had a confidence in the lenity of government, founded on the sympathy of religion between the Castle and the Orange Boys, and that the latter had therefore, under the presumption of connivance, continued to commit the most daring outrages. That to suppose that government was inadequate to suppress this insurrection, when it has shewn itself not adequate only, but unrestrained in putting an end to other insurrections, was to allow government more indulgence than it deserved. That he did not approve of that expression in the speech, which represented these raging atrocities in the north as a disturbance not entirely suppressed ; such tenderness of language to such enormous practices against the poor and industrious, betrayed an indifference in the government to the protection of the lower orders of his majesty's Roman Catholic subjects ; that he was an enemy to equality of property, but a friend to equality of protection ; and that in his opinion the best method of preventing equality of property was to afford equality of protection. Mr. Grattan then proceeded to consider the

* 17 Journ. Com. p. 9.

† 17 Parl. Deb. p. 9.

war in general: he represented in the highest glow of colouring the different situations of the several powers of Europe, and when he came to his own country, he exclaimed, "There was also Ireland; poor, plundered, ill
 "used, insulted, and forgiving Ireland; and though represented by the mi-
 "nions, *easily raised and easily put down*, pouring into the fleets and armies
 "until she was forced to leave herself without a soldier, for her minister's ill-
 "fated and wide-wasting West India expedition, where those ministers by
 "their plan and their delay supplied the place of plague, pestilence, and fa-
 "mine: loans granted more in one year, than she granted to any one mi-
 "nister in the course of any former war. They have had every thing from
 "the two islands which an old country, that was relaxed, and a young one,
 "that was ill administered, could afford: every thing in England but en-
 "thusiasm, and in Ireland every thing but the good opinion of the people,
 "and all to send an ambassador to ask peace of the French Republic." He
 concluded* a very long, eloquent, and severe harangue against the ministers,
 by moving the following amendment: "To represent to his majesty, that the
 "most effectual method for strengthening the country and promoting una-
 "nimity, was to take such measures, and to enact such laws, as to ensure
 "to all his majesty's subjects the blessings and privileges of the constitution,

* 17 Parl. Deb. p. 13. The conclusion of his speech was to this effect. "Rely on it, ministers
 "must reconcile: they must capitulate: it is not to them a new thing: they capitulated in 93
 "to the Catholic claim. What great measure has been carried for this country but by their capi-
 "tulation? The declaration of rights, &c. &c. &c. nor can the English cabinet have any qualm
 "on this occasion: the English cabinet have been of late years in the course of capitulation: they
 "capitulated to America: they now capitulate to the French Republic: and why not capitulate to
 "Ireland? This country can only be saved by her own force, and her own force can only be pro-
 "cured by adopting the Catholics; and they can only be adopted by a total and entire change of
 "maxims, measures, and manners, accompanied with a free and full participation of whatever pri-
 "vileges the constitution can boast, and what is infinitely more essential, whatever privileges the
 "constitution intended. This is the force, the power, the charm, the staff of your saint, that will
 "banish from your isle all noxious animals; the wand that opens the sea to the English, and will
 "wall it up against the French. Quick, very quick! you have not a moment to lose; you have
 "given your fellow subjects a share of your taxes, your defeat, and depopulation; kindly, very
 "kindly—give them now a share of your blessings, whatever your ministers have left you. Let us
 "make no more sacrifices of our liberties: let us now sacrifice our prejudices: they will ascend
 "in smoke, the best use we can make of them, and be a tidings to your God, that you are become
 "a convert to your country."

“ without any distinction of religion.” The amendment was seconded by Mr. W. B. Ponsonby.

The debate was carried on till two o'clock in the morning with extreme heat and virulence. Mr. Grattan's amendment was opposed, as unreasonable and violent by several of those, who had been in the habit of voting with him on all occasions; inasmuch that the minority on the division consisted only of 12 against 149. To this circumstance Mr. Grattan adverted in his reply. He was told, he said, that he was near the close of his political life: he would however borrow a few moments of that life to repeat the sentiment, and reaffirm a claim dear to his heart, however reduced their number, however solitary their phalanx. In the course of this debate Lord Castlereagh replied with great warmth to Mr. Grattan; and Mr. Pelham spoke more at length than he usually did: he adopted the observation of his friend Mr. Alexander, that the statement of the British empire made by Mr. Grattan was more likely to have come from a member of the French Assembly than an Irish legislator. He particularly adverted to the two topics, which had formed the principal ground of the debate; namely, the question of Catholic emancipation, and the disturbances of Armagh. As to the first, he thought it very improperly brought forward at that juncture. It was then no time to make distinctions between Catholics and Protestants; no such distinction was made by government. In the offers to arm, the Catholics had been as forward as the Protestants. In some *counties, where gentlemen attached to the Pro-

* Historical justice requires, that we notice, that the minister's assertion rather confirms, than defeats the former observations upon the discouragement given to the Catholics arming. He says, that in *some counties*, *some* gentlemen attached to the Protestant ascendancy had included *many* Catholics in their lists. The obvious inference is, that in most cases, the reverse had happened. The very term *many Catholics* bespeaks a proportionate paucity, when bearing upon a population that consists of more than three Catholics to one Protestant. Neither did his justification of the county of Armagh meet the objections, which had been complained of. The persecution of the Catholics in that county had been complained of for years; and the application of remedy is spoken of, only *as, since* the last session. The reason he gave for not promulgating the insurrection law in that county, could convey little satisfaction to the people aggrieved or to the public at large; because the magistrates were always complained of as the immediate and efficient instrument of the evil. Mr. Grattan (17 Parl. Deb. p. 50.) thought the audacity of the mob arose from a confidence in the connivance of government; under an administration sent thither to defeat a Catholic bill, a Protestant mob very naturally conceived itself a part of the state, and exercised the power of life, and death, and transportation, and murder, and rape with triumph; and with the seeming sympathy with the court religion the magistrates retire from the scene of action, &c.

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testant ascendancy resided, some of whom had saved their counties from ruin, those very gentlemen had come forward with offers to raise corps, and in their lists had included many Roman Catholics. Some Roman Catholics had, no doubt, been persuaded, that such distinctions were adopted by government, and he found it necessary to state what he then did, lest the high authority of some gentlemen who had that night promoted that opinion, should sanction the report. The Armagh disturbance had been last session a subject of discussion; government had been then exculpated by the gentlemen of that country. Since that time an officer of the highest credit and reputation had been established there, and every effort made to restore that order, which was approaching every day. The noble lord near him had replied to the charge of not promulgating the insurrection law; and he had only to add, that the disturbances there appeared to the magistrates not to require the enforcement of that very severe law.

Mr. Archdal justified the magistrates of Armagh, by asking, if assistance had ever been called for, and refused? No. Had means of prevention ever been pointed out and neglected? No. Had any culpable magistrates been particularized, and protected? No. If any magistrate should be thereafter sentenced as culpable, would he not be punished? Yes, and exemplarily. Mr. Corry bore testimony of the exertions of government in suppressing those disturbances. He had been on the grand jury on the two last assizes: and though at the Spring assizes many rioters of all descriptions had been tried and convicted, such was the good effect of the example then made, that very few came before the grand jury at the Summer assizes, in proportion to the number that had been committed in the Spring. Mr. George Ponsonby and Mr. Grattan replied in a very animated strain to that part of Mr. Pelham's speech, in which he had asserted, that the exclusion of Catholics from parliament and the state, was necessary for the crown and the connexion: that he was ready then, and at all times, to meet the question, and to support it with his life and fortune.*

The

* To this, Mr. Grattan thus strongly spoke: (17 *Parl. Deb.* p. 48.) " This dreadful, this
 " deadly, this wild, and this fatal proscription, when he is calling for volunteers to enrol in the ser-
 " vice, what language, what denunciation, what dictation could France have suggested more oppor-
 " tune in time, more pregnant in disaffection, or more authoritative in mischief? His practical
 " logic has been, that in times of apprehended invasion, it is perilous to hold the language of recon-
 " ciliation,

The second day of the session was ordered for the house to resolve itself into a committee for suspending the Habeas Corpus Act, when Mr. George Ponsonby observed, that were he to stand alone, he should exert his utmost powers to resist the measure. He had every respect for his excellency, who was nominally the author of it, while it really belonged to others. He was aware, that the present members of administration in his country, were men of vindictive spirit, and he did not wish to entrust the whole personal liberty of the subject to lovers of vengeance. After passing that bill into a law, they might apprehend any person obnoxious to them, without even giving reasons for such arbitrary conduct, and leave them to languish in gaol as long as they thought proper. He wished the house to make a material distinction with regard to words. Ministers confounded the words *administration* and *government*; they wished to hold forth all who opposed their measures as inimical to the king and constitution. He was convinced there was a great portion of disaffection to the present administration, but he could not think the quantum of disaffection to the constitution was much; he did not mean to say, there were none disaffected to the constitution, but he was aware, that no quantity of sedition or treason existed so great or prevalent as to justify the passing of such an arbitrary law. The end proposed was not meant as a greater protection to the king and constitution. It was designed as an instrument of terror and vengeance in the hands of ministers. In that idea he would always oppose it, and therefore he moved, that the chairman do leave the chair.

Mr. Prime Serjeant said, if the honorable gentleman disbelieved the ex-

“ ciliation, and discreet to hold the language of proscription. Eternal and indefeasible proscrip-
 “ tion! denounced by a minister of the crown, speaking to three-fourths of his majesty’s subjects.
 “ France knew perfectly well, that she had gained Brabant, but she did not know till now, that
 “ she had gained in the councils of the King of England, that fatal partizan, who, with the best in-
 “ tention in the world, could thus in his majesty’s dominions, and from his seat in parliament re-
 “ cruit for the French republic. The member may rely on it, the Catholic—the Irish will not
 “ long submit to such an interdict; they will not suffer a stranger (amiable as the right honorable
 “ member may be, he is but a stranger) to tell us on what proud terms English government will
 “ consent to rule in Ireland, still less to pronounce and dictate the incapacity of the natives, as the
 “ terms of her dominion, and the base condition of our connection and allegiance. We love the
 “ monarchy, and we love the connection, as compatible with, and instrumental to the preservation
 “ of Irish liberties—preferring our own liberties and our own people of all religions, to all things,
 “ and to all other countries. Rely on it, the ministry must retract that denunciation.”

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istence of treasonable conspiracies in the country, he must have rejected the evidence of his eyes and ears; he himself knew, both as a private gentleman and a professional man, that such treasons did exist. Numberless concurring instances were notoriously in proof of that fact, from the trial and conviction of Jackson to that of Weldon and his accomplices; that of Traynor and other traitors, who were convicted on the clearest evidence, proved the fact beyond all rational doubt.

Mr. Duquery called the attention of the house to a question of the greatest moment. A great portion of the liberty of the subject was to be sacrificed without any evidence to justify such a measure.

In England, when such a law had been resorted to, the British minister had given sufficient previous notice, and collected a mass of evidence; and he must wonder, and it must pierce the feelings of an Irishman, to perceive all the shelter of the subject to be removed, without the smallest proof that a conspiracy existed; or if it existed, without allowing time for discussing the expediency of the suspension. Why was not a secret committee appointed to enquire whether or not such a conspiracy had existed? Surely the house was not to rely on a short speech from an attorney general as sufficient evidence to repeal the Habeas Corpus. He wished ministers to consider the tendency of their measures; they ought rather to inspire amongst the people a love of their king and government, than to goad them to resistance. The fleet being sent abroad to Newfoundland, and elsewhere, shewed that no invasion was apprehended. Mr. Duquery concluded a very strong and able speech, by saying, that last sessions the trial by jury had been voted away, and that was to be made memorable by repealing the Habeas Corpus.

The attorney general insisted on the precedents which had been resorted to, as a justification of the bill. Fifteen persons had been lately committed by a warrant from the King's Bench, not insignificant, but persons of property and some influence, who joined to sow sedition and create disaffection against the king and constitution. Beside, the former trials shewed, that there did exist a rooted conspiracy in the country, which called aloud for coercion and prevention. It was notorious, that there had been emissaries from France, to open the way to an invasion; and the members of the convention in their speeches talked of preparations for an invasion.

Mr. Fletcher felt himself called upon to animadvert, as he did with some asperity, upon the indecent speed, with which such a bill was sought to be hurried through the house.

Mr.

Mr. Curran conjured the house to reflect seriously upon the moment that had been chosen by administration for the bringing in of the bill; he thought it a melancholy proof of their want of temper and judgment. In the debates upon that motion, the rights of the Roman Catholics had been strongly urged, and as strongly opposed; the disposition of the administration towards them was fully manifested, and the motion was rejected; of the propriety of that rejection he would not speak, he could not but lament it; he lamented still more the effect, that he was sure the making of the present bill the immediate sequel to that rejection would have on the public mind. At two in the morning the house was moved for leave to bring in a bill to repeal the Habeas Corpus Act; at five minutes past two in the morning the bill was read a first time, and after a grave and mature deliberation, the bill was ordered to be read, and was accordingly read a second time at ten minutes after two in the morning: its principle was then fully considered and approved of; and at fifteen minutes after two in the morning it was laid before a committee of the whole house.

Some gentlemen on both sides held very inflammatory language, and the question being called for at a late hour by the house upon Mr. G. Ponsonby's motion, 7 only voted for it, and 137 opposed it.

Mr. Grattan on the 17th of February, 1797, introduced the question of Catholic emancipation. He travelled over every old argument, upon which he threw new light: he discussed all our continental alliances lost, gained, or retained: ridiculed the idea of Popish tenets entering into the grounds of their formation or abandonment. He minutely investigated the principles, pretext, and method of raising the Irish brigade of 6000 Catholics, under Catholic and French officers. He calculated the numerical and physical advantages, which the British navy and army received from Ireland. He concluded a very long, animated, and elaborate speech, by the following resolution: * " That the admissibility of persons professing the Roman Catholic
" religion

* 17 Parl. Deb. p. 80. Towards the conclusion of the speech, Mr. Grattan thus broke out against the persons whom he considered as possessing and monopolizing the whole power of the state: " These men prescribe for these things as the old natural jobbers of the country, they demand all power and all place, in consideration of the superior purity and disinterestedness of their religion; ' Give us all the good things on earth, in the name of God; and in God's mercy give nothing to the rest of our fellow subjects!' Thus this pure and pious passion for church and state, turns out to be a sort of political gluttony—an ascendency hunger—a state voracity—an inordinate appetite for temporal gratifications; in consideration of spiritual perfection; and in
" consequence

“ religion to seats in parliament is consistent with the safety of the crown, and the connection of Great Britain with Ireland.” The resolution was seconded by Mr. G. Ponsonby. Mr. Knox, Sir B. Roche, Sir Frederick Flood, Sir Hercules Langrishe, and several other members, who agreed with the principle of the resolution, voted against it, merely because they then thought it unseasonable to discuss the question. Dr. Duigenan made a most diffuse and infuriated Philippic against Popery, impregnated with every inflammable matter, that the blind prejudice and bigotry of the most barbarous ages have ever administered to the fanatic. He was abusive in the extreme to the existing generation of his Catholic countrymen, and treated Mr. Byrne and Keogh as notorious traitors. Messrs. Curran, Duquerry, Fletcher, and Mr. George Ponsonby spoke warmly for the question. Mr. G. Ogle and Sir John Parnell against it. It was carried at half past three o’clock in the morning, by 143 against 19. This was the last time the question of Catholic emancipation was brought before the Irish parliament.

When Mr. Secretary Pelham moved on the 26th of October, 1796, that the house should adjourn for about a fortnight; Mr. Curran strongly opposed it; particularly upon the grounds of the necessity of putting an immediate check upon the still continuing outrageous disturbances of Armagh, which surpassed in horror every thing he had ever heard or read. He had on the first day of the session stated the number of families that had become the victims of that infernal barbarity at 700; it was with great pain he mentioned, that upon more minute inquiry, he found as many more must be added to the miserable catalogue: he was in possession of evidence, ready to be examined at their bar, and whom he hoped they would hear, which would satisfy

“ consequence of this vile and mean, selfish and beastly monopoly, your state becomes an oligarchy, the worst species of oligarchy, a plebeian oligarchy. I love the Protestants, I love the Presbyterians, and I love the Catholics, that is, I love the Irish; if ever my affection abates, it is when they hate one another.” He said he approved of the British ministry, when they liberalized towards the Catholic, and condemned the ministry in 1795, when it renounced its liberality and its honor, and returned to its barbarity, and employed Christian sects, like Hell-hounds, to hunt down one another. That in consequence of this, they have set up in Ireland a proscriptive state—a proscriptive parliament—a proscriptive monarchy—a proscriptive connexion; they have done so, when the condition of the empire is in a great degree feeble, and that of the constitution in the last degree corrupt. Thus they make the empire feeble, and the constituted authorities profligate, and after purpose to make them proscriptive; and do this when they are to encounter abroad, not only the triumph of arms but of revolutions, as one way of defeating both and setting them at defiance,

them upon oath, that not less than 1400 families had been thus barbarously expelled from their houses, and then were wandering about the neighbouring counties, save such of them as might have been murdered, or burned in their cottages, or perished in the fields, or highways, by fatigue and famine, and despair; and that horrid scene had been transacted, and was still continuing in the open day, in the heart of the kingdom, without any effectual interference whatsoever.

Mr. Pelham persisted in his motion for adjournment; and he thought it incumbent on him, to give his reasons for so doing, to prevent on the one hand, an idea that government was averse to the investigation of the excesses, that had been stated by the honorable gentleman: and on the other, that his motive for not opposing that investigation, should not be misunderstood. He certainly neither wished to evade, or to postpone such an investigation; but as what passed within those walls, was not always confined to them, he begged to protest against this concession to an investigation being considered as an atonement to the people, for the neglect of government: on the contrary, he said, he was firmly convinced, that when such an enquiry should be instituted, it would appear, that government had used the utmost vigilance and diligence in their endeavours to allay and quell the disorders that had been so much complained of, and so strongly painted by the honorable gentleman. He could not, however, help remarking, that all his eloquence had been employed in the description of the outrages committed by one class of offenders, and that he had been totally silent, as to those (certainly equally atrocious) committed by another class: and he hoped, that if it should be thought proper to go into the enquiry fought by the honorable gentleman, that enquiry might be extended to those enormities practised by mobs raised for the purpose of exciting sedition, and bearing the standard of disaffection.

Mr. Grattan thought that his honorable friend could not have any objection to extend the object of the enquiry as far as the right honorable gentleman had mentioned, and he recommended it to him not to press his motion: upon which Mr. Pelham's motion passed in the affirmative, and the house adjourned from various times to the 6th of January, 1797.

The Irish nation was at this time worked up to a state of extraordinary fermentation. Some of the operative causes were natural and irresistible; others were grounded in reflex malevolence: the most of them sprang out of misrepresentation and the rancorous animosity of party. That some of those
out

out of parliament, who stood the most forward on the popular questions in Ireland, had at this time basely become patricides, and imbrued themselves in the guilt of treason is a lamentable truth. But it is also a melancholy consideration to reflect, that the negociations of those traitors with the French cabinet were either unknown, connived at, or flighted. It is a notorious fact, that the preparations and intentions of the French government to make a descent upon Ireland had been spoken of throughout Great Britain and Ireland during the whole of the Autumn, with a constancy and familiarity, that bred discredit in the people and neglect in the government. The great project of invading that country was particularly encouraged, though not guarded against at that moment of renovated and extended hostility. Our cabinet either doubted or flighted the preparation and energy of the enemy. The armament, designed for this great expedition, had been preparing, at Brest, during the whole Summer. It consisted of twenty-five ships of the line, including the seven that composed the squadron of Admiral Richery, who was to join it with all speed, fifteen stout frigates, besides sloops and transports for an army of 25,000 men, to be commanded by General Hoche, whose military abilities were esteemed equal to those of any officer in the French service, Moreau and Buonaparte himself scarcely excepted.

Through several unforeseen accidents this armament was not ready for sailing till the 18th of December. On going out of Brest, some of the largest ships struck upon the rocks at the mouth of the harbour, several were lost, and others rendered unfit for service. The day after its departure, a violent storm arose, which dispersed the fleet, and damaged many of the ships. This tempestuous weather lasted during the whole time of the expedition. On the 24th, Admiral Bouvet, commander in chief of the French fleet, anchored with seven ships of the line, and ten others, in Bantry Bay. In order to reconnoitre the country, a boat was dispatched towards shore; but it was immediately captured, and multitudes appeared on the beach in readiness to oppose a landing. After lying some days in this bay, the storminess of the weather increased, and on receiving no intelligence of General Hoche and his staff, who were in a frigate, that parted from the fleet in the gale of wind, the French admiral determined to quit his position, and return to France. The land officers insisted on landing the troops; but, as General Hoche was absent, he refused to comply with their representations, and set sail for Brest, where he arrived on the last day of December. The other di-

vitions of his fleet had also the good fortune to reach that harbour, with the loss, however, of five ships; two of the line, and three frigates: one of the latter was captured by the English, and two foundered at sea, with one of the former. The other, after a desperate engagement, with some ships of the British squadron, off Brest, ran ashore to prevent being taken.

The fate of this fleet of the enemy, proved, that a superior naval force is not, in all cases, a certain security against invasion. Ireland, notwithstanding the superiority of the British fleet, was sixteen days at the mercy of the enemy, and saved from attack only by the elements.

Such was the issue of that famous expedition: the real object of which had long kept Europe in suspense. The failure of it was owing to a string of fortuitous circumstances, which certainly leave no merit to the attention, vigilance, or energy of government. No preparation whatever was made either by land or sea to resist the invasion, on behalf of either the British or Irish cabinet: the contradictory communications of the rebel leaders with the French cabinet, occasioned a like want of preparation to receive the enemy on the part of the Irish directory.* And the people were loyal, because

* The secret committee of the Lords in 1798 (viii Lords' Journ. p. 142) gives the following account of this transaction: " It appears by the report of the secret committee of this house made in the last session of parliament, that a messenger had been dispatched by the society of United Irishmen to the executive directory of the French republic, upon a treasonable mission, between the month of June, one thousand seven hundred and ninety-five, and the month of January, one thousand seven hundred and ninety-six, at which time the messenger so sent had returned to Ireland: and your committee have strong reason to believe, that Edward John Lewins, who now is, and has been, for a considerable time, the accredited resident ambassador of the Irish rebellious union to the French republic, was the person thus dispatched in the Summer of one thousand seven hundred and ninety-five. It appears to your committee, that the proposition so made by the French directory, of assistance to the rebels of this kingdom, was taken into consideration by the executive directory of the Irish union immediately after it was communicated to them, that they did agree to accept the proffered assistance, and that their determination was made known to the directory of the French republic by a special messenger; and your committee have strong reason to believe, that the invasion of this kingdom which was afterwards attempted, was fully arranged at an interview which took place in Switzerland, in the Summer of one thousand seven hundred and ninety-six, near the French frontier, between Lord Edward Fitzgerald, the aforesaid Mr. Arthur O'Connor, and General Hoche. It appears to your committee, that in the month of October or November, one thousand seven hundred and ninety-six, the hostile armament which soon after appeared in Bantry Bay, was announced to the Irish directory by a special messenger dispatched from France, who was also instructed to enquire into the state of preparation

cause left to themselves. Nothing could exceed the consternation, which the report of the arrival of the French fleet off Bantry Bay created in the capital, except the loyalty and zeal of all ranks of people to go out and meet the enemy. Notwithstanding the extreme rigor of the season, the southern roads were covered with troops on their march, and an active peasantry vieing with each other in clearing the roads, and administering to the troops whatever comforts their scanty means and bountiful hearts enabled them. The fortuitous failure of the French invasion was a critical moment for Ireland: it had furnished a very strong and unexpected test of the loyal disposition of the Irish people; and some real patriots fondly augured from it favorable symptoms from government towards their countrymen. Reports were circulated with credit, that measures of conciliation towards Ireland had been resolved on by the British cabinet. Catholic emancipation and temperate reform were now confidentially again spoken of: and Lord Camden, whose administration was pledged to resist those two questions, it was generally expected would immediately resign. These flattering prospects were encouraged by the then prevailing report, that the Prince of Wales had offered his services to the King to go to Ireland in quality of lord lieutenant, and to exert all his popularity with that nation, in restoring it to tranquillity. His royal highness had proposed to take with him Lord Moira as commander in chief, with a splendid establishment worthy of the dignity of the people, whose royalty he was to represent. The prince had at this time entered cordially into the true political situation of that kingdom; and in order that no mistake might even be pretended, relative to his royal highness's sentiments upon the Irish nation, he delivered a paper to the minister, drawn up in the

“paration in which this country stood, which armament was then stated to the Irish directory to
 “consist of fifteen thousand troops, together with a considerable quantity of arms and ammunition,
 “intended for the use of the Irish republican union. In a few days after the departure of the mes-
 “senger, who had been thus sent to announce the speedy arrival of this armament on the coasts of
 “this kingdom, it appears to your committee, that a letter from France was received by the Irish
 “directory, which was considered by them as authentic, stating that the projected descent was
 “postponed for some months, and to this circumstance it has been fairly acknowledged to your
 “committee, by one of the Irish directory, that this country was indebted for the good conduct
 “of the people in the province of Munster, when the enemy appeared in Bantry Bay. He has
 “confessed, that these contradictory communications threw the Irish directory off their guard, in
 “consequence of which they omitted to prepare the people for the reception of the enemy. He
 “has confessed, that the people were loyal, because they were left to themselves.”

most

most concise, energetic, and constitutional language, expressive of his disposition and judgment in favor of a system of conciliation. The British minister received the proposition with all the respect, which the patriotism, judgment, and virtue of the exalted character who made it, deserved. It was the subject for a time of most important discussion: but the power of the Irish junto prevailed: the system of coercion preponderated: and the offer even of the heir apparent to the crown to attempt the conciliation of the Irish people was rejected. Both the British and Irish ministers appeared to dread the opportunity, which Ireland would then have of testifying their predilection and admiration of that illustrious prince; and the occasion, which such an appointment would afford to his royal highness of displaying his affection for the people of Ireland, in a mild system of measures, politic at all times, necessary at that time, and supereminently congenial with his own disposition and sentiments.*

The critical moment of the French retiring from the Irish coast from want

* Objections were industriously circulated against the appointment of the prince, as a matter wholly unprecedented. Many and powerful reasons plead in favor of the appointment of their future monarch: few and weak are the reasons against it. In the space of about 300 years history affords us no fewer than fourteen precedents of princes of the blood having been appointed chief governors of Ireland. It must certainly be the true policy of a sound government to ingratiate a country, seldom blest with the presence of their monarch, to the reigning family. The following are the instances, in which princes of the blood royal have been appointed to the government of Ireland:

<i>Under</i> HENRY II.		HENRY VI.	
A. D. 1177	John, Earl of Moreton, son to the king.	A. D. 1449	Richard, Duke of York.
1185	The same.	1459	The same.
HENRY III.		EDWARD IV.	
1252	Prince Edward, eldest son to the king.	1462	George, Duke of Clarence, brother to the king.
EDWARD III.		RICHARD III.	
Sept. 8th, 1361	Lionel, Duke of Lancaster, third son to the king.	1483	Edward, eldest son to the king.
HENRY IV.		HENRY VII.	
Nov. 13th, 1401	Thomas, Duke of Lancaster, son to the king.	1495	Henry, Duke of York, second son to the king, afterward Henry VIII.
1406	The same.	1498	The same.
1408	The same.		

of

of internal co-operation, would have been a fortunate hour to that kingdom, had proper advantage been taken of it, to reclaim the malcontents, and afford that redress which then was generally called for, uprightly and sincerely by most, insidiously and traitorously by some few. It has been avowed by some of the leading characters of that rebellious *union, that after the intended descent had failed, it occurred to some members of the association, and their friends in the city, and to some of the most considerate of the united Irishmen, that one more attempt should be made in favor of parliamentary reform. They hoped, that the terrible warning which had been given by the facility of reaching our coasts, and if the armament had landed, the possibility at least of its succeeding, would have shewn the borough proprietors the necessity of conceding to the popular wish. The storm had dispersed a cloud big with danger, but it might again collect, and the thunder of republic and revolution again roll, and perhaps burst over their heads. This was then judged the best moment to persuade them in the midst of their fears, to a measure strictly counter-revolutionary. On that occasion the three memorializing unionists declared, that no greater connection had ever subsisted between any of the members of the opposition and the united Irishmen, except in that instance, and for the accomplishment of that purpose. In consequence of their joint efforts, a meeting was holden at the Exchange, which declared in favor of the reform, and a proposal of that nature was submitted to parliament. If in the course of that effort for reform it had not become evident, that success was hopeless, it was the wish of many among the united Irishmen, and the executive would have gladly embraced the occasion of declining to hold any further intercourse with France, except sending a messenger there to tell them, that the difference between the government and the people had been adjusted, and that they would have no business a second time to attempt a landing.

It is not to be wondered at, that persons, who have taken the desperate step of involving themselves in high treason, should for their iniquitous purposes assume the garb of extraordinary and zealous attachment to the constitution. Thus did Mr. Arthur O'Connor foully impose upon some of the first and most pure political characters of the age, both in his own country and in Great Britain. It is impossible to acquit him under the consciousness

* Memoir, p. 18.

of his own guilt of a malicious intent rather to injure and malign his pretended friends by his intimacy, than to screen his crimes under their virtue. Hitherto he was not known to have proceeded to any overt act, by which he could be convicted of guilt. About the end of January, 1797, he wrote and circulated a very inflammatory letter to his fellow citizens upon the general crisis of affairs, and particularly in commendation of the spirit and engagements of the united Irishmen. It produced a strong effect upon the public mind; government took the alarm; Mr. Arthur O'Connor was arrested for it, by an order of the privy council, and closely confined as a state prisoner in the Tower.*

† On the 6th of January, 1797, Mr. Secretary Pelham, in his place, read to the house a message from his excellency the lord lieutenant, in purport, That his excellency was commanded by his majesty, to acquaint his faithful parliament, with deep concern on the part of his majesty, that his exertions to prevent a farther extension of the miseries of warfare in Europe, by an amicable adjustment of the matters lately pending in discussion with the court of Spain, had failed of success, and terminated, on the part of Spain, by an abrupt and aggressive declaration of war against Great Britain.

The message then adverted to the failure of the negotiation with the power executing the government of France, which was also abruptly broken off by that power, without any discussion of the principle or objects proposed as a ground of peace, with peremptory orders for his majesty's ambassador to quit the French territory within forty-eight hours.

The message next recurred to the recent attempt of an enemy's squadron to invade the shores of that country; and while his excellency expressed the deep sense of the spirit, the alacrity, and the loyalty manifested on that occasion, he avowed his majesty's command to declare in his royal name the most favorable sense and highest approbation of the general spirit of loyalty and alacrity, which on that occasion universally actuated his majesty's regular troops, militia, yeomanry corps, and every class of his faithful subjects; expressing at the same time, that the same tempest, which, providentially for Ireland, proved so destructive to the enemy's squadron, had prevented

* In order to shew the progress of the rebellion, and the means, by which many were seduced from their allegiance, this letter may be seen in the Appendix, No. C.

† 17 Parl. Deb. p. 154.

his fleets from coming time enough to their coasts to complete their ruin, but which, it was hoped, would be effected before they could reach France.

His majesty, ever zealous for the safety of his kingdom of Ireland, had in readiness to embark for her aid an ample force, had the landing of an enemy rendered it necessary.

Mr. Pelham then gave notice, that he should on the morrow move for a committee of the whole house, to take his excellency's message into consideration. And when on the next day he moved an address to his majesty, for his gracious communication, which as usual re-echoed the several parts of the message, except the last paragraph, which expressed the gratitude of the house for the continuation of Lord Camden in the government of the country, and their high approbation of his administration ;

Mr. Grattan said, that the address comprehended a variety of subjects, on which there would probably be no difference of opinion, but to several he could not, for one, perfectly agree. That part, for instance, which related to the failure of the negotiation with France, and that relative to the conduct of his majesty's ministers, so far as it concerned the invasion, would certainly not meet with a unanimous approbation. With respect to the invasion, all would indeed agree, that the loyalty, the zeal, and the promptness of the country deserved even more panegyric, than the address bestowed upon it: but why then combine that question, on which all were agreed, with that other question, whether the administration of Great Britain had been equally zealous in affording to Ireland the protection of the British navy? Why combine it with the negotiation for peace, in which the sincerity of the minister was at least questionable? He thought it, therefore, necessary to amend the address in these instances; and accordingly moved an amendment: " That
 " this house feel the highest confidence in his majesty's wishes for the resto-
 " ration of peace, and his solicitude for the safety of this kingdom; but
 " could not implicitly concur, that his majesty's ministers had been serious in
 " their negotiations for that object with France; or that the naval force of
 " Great Britain had been exerted on the late alarming occasion with due vi-
 " gilance or activity for the protection of this kingdom." It was seconded by Mr. William Brabazon Ponsonby.

The debate was continued with much heat and some acrimony: it principally bore upon the point of Great Britain's having so totally abandoned the defence of Ireland, even under the avowedly known purpose of the Brest

armament, that not one British ship of the line was to be seen off the whole coast of that country. The opposition in parliament had so much dwindled, that upon the division, 7 only voted for Mr. Grattan's amendment, against 90 who opposed it.

Although very beneficial effects might proceed from the appointment of assistant barristers to attend the sessions, which gave to government a new patronage of about 13,000*l.* per annum, under the civil bill act of the last session, yet the gentlemen of the opposition within, and most of the popular party without the walls of parliament, inveighed against the establishment, as calculated more for a ministerial job, than for utility to the country: and on the 13th of February, 1797, Mr. William Smith, upon the report of an intended appointment of a country gentleman to fill a vacancy in the county of Wexford, who was no practising barrister, made a long speech upon the subject. He was, he said, particularly called upon to advert to this threatened violation of a clause in that act, because he had taken a share in its introduction.* Upon a reply from the solicitor general, which imported, that the person alluded to would not be appointed, the matter passed over.

Sir Lawrence Parsons, than whom no man looked more earnestly to the strength, honor, and support of his country, complained on the 20th of February, that pledged as he stood to bring forward on that day a proposition for the defence of the kingdom at that critical period, he could not justify to himself or his constituents any further delay. Sir John Blaquiere then observed, that forty-four days had passed, since the enemy had quitted their ports, and that the addition of another day's delay would be but a small sacrifice. He made the strongest eulogium on what Sir Lawrence Parsons had said; that it was a spirit like his would save the country, but was happy that he had acceded to the adjournment, having the greatest reliance on what might be expected from the wisdom and talents of Mr. Pelham, on the following day.

Then Mr. G. Poulsonby gave notice of his intention to bring forward, on the first open day, a question for investigating the steps taken by his majesty's ministers for the defence of this country, previously to, and during the late

* 17 Parl. Deb. p. 305. The clause empowered the lord lieutenant to appoint either a barrister of six years standing and actually practising at the time of appointment, or who had actually practised for six years, and was not actually retired for more than two years from practising in his majesty's courts in Dublin.

attempt of invasion, and to move for certain documents preparatory to the enquiry. To which, by the desire of the attorney general, he, after a short preface, moved: “ That an humble address be presented to the lord lieutenant, praying that his excellency would be pleased to order to be laid before the house extracts of such communications as had been received by government from his Grace the Duke of Portland, between the 1st of August last and the 20th of December, relative to an invasion of that country.”

Mr. Pelham opposed the motion, because it appeared to him impossible, that such papers could be made public without communicating to the enemy a knowledge of many things, which it would be highly improper they should be informed of. He was willing to allow, and indeed the speech of his excellency on the opening of the session had declared, that administration had intelligence of the intended invasion so early as the beginning of October last. He thought this would be considered as a sufficient ground for the honorable member on which to found his enquiry, without seeking to disclose the correspondence of government.

Mr. Ponsonby contended, that it was of much importance to learn whether government had not full information on this subject, so early as the beginning of August, three months before the opening of the session, within which period they had ample opportunity of putting the country into a state of defence. But in order to obviate the objection of the right honorable member, he would be content if the right honorable member would state to the house, at what time government first had notice of the intended descent; to which request Mr. Pelham made no reply, and the question was put, and negatived without a division.

Mr. Ponsonby then moved, successively, that addresses should be presented to his excellency, praying him to lay before the house,

“ An account of the number of effective troops in the province of Munster, on the 20th of December last:” and “ An account of the number of effective troops of the line, and in the regiments of militia and fencibles in this kingdom, on the 20th of December last:” and “ An account of the cannon fit for service on the same day, also the quantity of ammunition in the magazines, and the quantity of camp equipage and arms fit for immediate service.”

Each of these motions was opposed, as tending to disclose the situation of the country, and create discontent and fear in the public mind.

Sir Lawrence Parsons then rose to enquire of Mr. Secretary Pelham, on the part of the country, and of the house, what measures he intended to propose on that momentous subject, mutual defence.

Mr. Pelham stated, the result of his exertions for that country to be, that the two countries should, as occasion might require, assist each other; that if Ireland wanted troops, in case of an attack, Great Britain should send some of hers; and that if Great Britain, on the other hand, should need assistance against an invading enemy, Ireland should lend her similar assistance. Besides this, he briefly mentioned some other arrangements of a pecuniary nature, in which Ireland was to receive assistance from Great Britain; but which would come more properly to be explained in the committee of supply.

A most extraordinary debate followed this resolution. The house being in committee, many of the members availed themselves of their privilege of speaking more than once, and between three and four o'clock in the morning, they reported progress and adjourned. The opposition members were severe on government for leaving the country in that defenceless state; and amongst the various modes of defence proposed, strongly urged an augmentation of the yeomanry corps to the amount of 50,000 men; which Mr. M. Beresford, who spoke from authority, explicitly reprobated, as a most mischievous measure; and he was supported by Lord Castlereagh. When Sir Lawrence Parsons complained of the opposition given by government to every mode of defence proposed, Mr. Pelham thought proper to disclaim any suspicion on the part of government against arming the people under the yeomanry act. The debate ended in the adoption of Sir John Blaquiere's motion, that 10,000 men should be raised for the public service: it being understood, that the mode of raising them, and the bounties to be given, should be entirely in the discretion of the government.

*On a subsequent night (the 24th) Sir Lawrence Parsons, after a very animated speech on the necessity of a permanent internal defence, moved the following resolution: "That it is the opinion of this house, that a considerable augmentation should be made to the yeomanry infantry, in addition to the present force of the country; and an address be presented to his

* 17 Parl. Deb. p. 351.

" excellency

“ excellency the lord lieutenant, praying, that he would be pleased to take
 “ the most effectual and speedy steps for that purpose; the exigency of the
 “ present times requiring, that the most prompt and extensive measures of
 “ defence be taken.”

Mr. Pelham said, that in hearing the honorable baronet, he had for some time forgot himself; and supposed he had been in one of the circles of Germany, where different parties bid for the people. Was that the Irish House of Commons, lately so zealous for the defence of the country, that he heard it urged, the people would attach themselves to the first invader, if arms were not put into their hands by government? What had changed the people whom, as the honorable baronet had said on a former night, he had seen with such alacrity drawing the cannon of his battalion? He then went into a refutation of the assertions of Sir Lawrence Parsons, that the French had, in the last armament, 25,000 men; he contended, from the best authority, that there were not at most above 12,000 men; that were they to come again, such measures had been concerted with Great Britain, that a large body of troops should in a few hours be in Ireland. That it was absurd to suppose, the British minister would not be interested for the safety of Ireland.

Mr. Grattan followed Mr. Pelham, and gave a very animated support to the motion of the honorable baronet. One would have thought, he said, from the vehemence with which the honorable baronet had been opposed, that he had proposed to diminish or disband the army or militia, instead of adding 50,000 men to the defence of the country. The honorable baronet said, it was necessary to face a victorious enemy with a large force, and make that force consist of the people. The English servant of the English minister said, “ What !
 “ would you have me bid for the people ? ” He would say to that English deputy of that English minister, if he would not bid for the people, he might go about his business. If he would not bid for the people, the monster of democracy, which had conquered Spain, Holland, Germany, and Italy, by bidding for the people, would bid for the people of Ireland. The bidding of the minister would then come too late. He had asked, who could be more interested for the safety of Ireland, than the British minister ? He would answer, Ireland herself. To refer to the British minister the safety of that country, was the most foolish folly ; it was false and unparliamentary to say, that the house had no right to recommend a measure, such as the honorable baronet proposed. Had it been a proposition to increase the regular standing
 army,

army, it might perhaps have been a little irregular; but when an increase of 10,000 to the standing army was proposed by a right honorable baronet the other night, it was not considered as an affront. Now another honorable baronet comes forward to give an army five fold as many, and five fold as cheap, and administration are affronted. Why? Because that army was of the people. If the doctrine the right honorable member advanced were true, and that the duty of parliament now were become nothing more than merely to vote taxes, and echo three millions, when the minister said three millions are wanted, then indeed *actum est de parlamento*; a reform of the representation was become then more than ever necessary.

After a debate, which was kept up with unusual heat till four o'clock in the morning, 25 voted for Sir Lawrence Parsons's motion, and 125 opposed it.

On the 27th, Mr. George Ponsonby moved for a vote of censure on the ministry for having been highly criminal for their neglect and unskilfulness in the provision, direction, and distribution of the military and naval force of the country, in the threatened invasion in the month of December last; which, after midnight, was negatived without a division.* The like fate attended Mr. Vandeleur's motion for an absentee tax, which was warmly debated to a very late hour: on this division,† more sided with the minority than on any

* It must readily appear, that the fate of this question was decided by influence, not by an investigation of facts. Mr. Grattan spoke in the debate, by merely making a statement. (17 *Parl. Deb.* p. 374.) "The circumstance of the French fleet escaping two British fleets, riding triumphantly for seventeen days, and getting back unmolested, formed a phenomenon in the naval history of Great Britain, which challenges enquiry. The plea urged in excuse, that the Admiralty was not acquainted with the destination of the French fleet, was a great aggravation of the neglect; though the truth of the plea were confirmed, by the declaration of the British minister, that the report of the French fleet being off the coast of Ireland was nothing more than the phrenzy of common fame."

† Lord Castlereagh took a very prominent part in opposing this question; to whom Mr. Vandeleur thus replied: "It was insinuated by a noble lord (Castlereagh), that it was presumptuous in a man of his age and experience to propose to that house a measure of such vast importance: he must confess, he did not possess the same advantages of political education with the noble lord: he well knew the Castle was a hot-bed, which opened the understanding and matured the judgment. It had so completely eradicated all prejudices from the mind of the noble lord, that he was unable to perceive, whether he spoke the language of the minister, or deputy minister of the English cabinet, or that of the representative of a great, populous, and independent country; which, by great and manly exertions, had ushered him into that house on the shoulders of popularity."

other

other question during the session; there being 49 for, and 123 against the motion.

The internal situation of the country was at this time truly awful. For some months had turbulence and insurrection shewn themselves in different parts of the kingdom. The lord lieutenant had been obliged to proclaim several counties and districts, under the insurrection act, to be in a state of disturbance. The different insurgents appeared to be unconnected with each other; for generally upon the appearance of the flightest military force they dispersed or returned to their duty: their turbulence was various; not systematic, nor organized.

In the preceding months of December, January, and February, many districts in the northern counties were proclaimed.* Amongst other distresses of the times brought on by the war, was the order of the privy council to the governors and company of the Bank of Ireland to discontinue payments in specie. This overwhelming circumstance filled the minds of the public with fresh diffidence, alarm, and discontent. It was communicated by Mr. Pelham to the parliament on the 1st of March; and afterwards debated with some ineffectual opposition. So critical at this period was the internal state of Ireland to the general interests of the British empire, that it arrested the attention of both houses of the British parliament.

In the British House of Commons on the 3d of March, 1797, the order of the day having been read for instituting an enquiry into the conduct of ministers on occasion of the late attempt of the French to invade Ireland, Mr. Whitbread entered into a full detail of the circumstances attending the whole of that expedition. After commenting upon the nature and effects of public and private information, and stating, that General Dalrymple had not at that time 3000 regular troops to oppose to the enemy; that there were stores unprotected in Cork to the amount of a million and a half, the great supply for the British navy for the ensuing year, he made the following regular statement of the motions of our own and the French fleets from the time of the enemy quitting the harbour of Brest, and a short period antecedent thereto. Admiral Colpoys, with a fleet of fourteen or fifteen sail of the line, was lying off Brest harbour for some weeks. The French fleet, however, in

* The proclamations all ran in one form; a specimen of which is to be seen in the Appendix, No. CI.

defiance of this, failed from Brest on the 15th of December. On the 20th of that month they arrived on the coast of Ireland, and some of them dropped anchor in Bantry Bay. Previous to that, and during the time that Admiral Colpoys was with his squadron lying off Brest, Admiral Richery, with six French ships of the line, passed the squadron of Admiral Colpoys, and got safe into Brest. On the 21st the enemy cast anchor in Bantry Bay; so that they were at sea, and on the coast of Ireland, from the 18th of December to the 6th of January. On the 20th of December news arrived in England, that the French fleet had quitted Brest. From the 23d to the 25th, the wind was favorable for the squadron under the command of Lord Bridport to have failed. It continued fair on the 26th and 27th, after which it came a-head, and the fleet could not fail for some days. On the 31st intelligence came to this country, that the French fleet was off the coast of Ireland, and on the same day, exactly, Admiral Colpoys, with the fleet under his command, arrived at Portsmouth. The reasons given for his return with this squadron were various and contradictory. One was, that his force was not sufficient to encounter that of the enemy. If that were a true reason, it furnished an additional cause for an enquiry into the conduct of ministers, and of the first lord of the admiralty in particular. What, when they had received information of the active and extensive preparations going forward at Brest, after the large sums consumed in secret service money, and the immense navy in our possession, ought they not to have sent out fresh ships to reinforce that squadron? Admiral Colpoys must have received intelligence of the sailing of the Brest fleet. Did he fail in pursuit of them? Did he fail towards the coast of Portugal after them, where it might perhaps have occurred to him they were gone? No. Did he fail after them towards the coast of Ireland? No: he failed directly for Portsmouth, where he arrived on the very day, that information was brought they were on the Irish coast. Another reason, which had been given for the return of this squadron into port was, that it was short of provisions. Admiral Elphinstone arrived in Ireland, in the *Monarch* of 74 guns, accompanied by a frigate. He gave notice to the castle of Dublin, that he, with the ship under his command, and with that frigate, was ready to join any other force that might be allotted for the purpose to go in search of the enemy. Admiral Kingsmill, who was stationed at Cork, also issued orders for several frigates and the *Monarch* to sail in quest of the enemy. Yet, on the 3d of January, Admiral Elphinstone arrived at Spithead, with the *Monarch*,
without

without having seen any of the enemy's fleet. On the same day Lord Bridport, with the squadron under his command, sailed from thence. He went first to Brest, as the most likely track for falling in with the enemy's ships. In that idea, however, he was disappointed: for his lordship, after some days waiting there to no effect or purpose, thought it necessary to shape his course to the coast of Ireland. In this farther pursuit he was equally unsuccessful; and on the 3d of February he returned to Spithead with the fleet under his command, without having fallen in with, or even seen one single ship belonging to the shattered, dispersed, and divided fleet of the enemy. Thus the designs of the enemy were only frustrated by the winds, and the safety of Ireland entirely abandoned to the chance of the elements. Such was the regular statement of events as they successively occurred; and those were the grounds on which he meant to found the motion: "That it be referred to a committee, to enquire into the conduct of ministers, with respect to the late attempt of the French in the invasion of Ireland."

Mr. Secretary Dundas in reply, after much prefatory matter, gave his statement of facts to the following effect. Prior to the sailing of the French fleet from Brest, the admiralty had received intelligence, that such a fleet was in preparation; it was not positively known whether it were intended to sail against Portugal or Ireland, or some part of the British dominions. Sometimes it was rumoured to be intended against Gibraltar, and at others it was expected to be prepared for an attack upon some of our more distant possessions. The admiralty, however, had some reason to believe, that either Portugal or Ireland was the object of its destination. Ministers adopted such measures as the nature of circumstances seemed to require. They took the properest and best possible measures which could be taken with their uncertainty of the enemy's designs; for it is to be observed, that they had not only to watch the hostile armaments of the enemy, and provide a sufficient force in every quarter, which they deemed assailable, to resist them, but they were compelled moreover to provide a large and adequate force at the same time for the protection of our outward and homeward bound fleets. Under these circumstances, government thought it the wisest plan to separate the fleets into different divisions. One fleet was stationed off Brest to watch the enemy, and intercept the sailing of the expedition; another fleet was stationed at home to relieve the fleet off Brest, if necessary, or to pursue the enemy if it should sail, or attend to any exigencies which might possibly arise. The fleet off Brest, under the command of Admiral Thompson, was

put under the command of Admiral Colpoys on the 9th of October; orders were issued from the admiralty to Admiral Thompson, from whom Admiral Colpoys received his instructions to take care of a partial disposition of the British fleet under his command off Brest, in case of a dispersion of the enemy in sailing from that port. He was to hover about their coast, and watch over them till they should sail, and, provided they steered to the southward, he was immediately to dispatch a cutter to Admiral Vandeput at Lisbon, to give communication of the same; or, provided they steered to the northward, he was to dispatch a cutter to Admiral Kingmill at Cork, at the same time taking care to give the earliest intelligence at home. Surely it was impossible to select any orders in preference to these; at least he could not imagine, that, considering all the circumstances of the case, any better could have been adopted. He then corrected a statement which had gone abroad, that no frigate or squadron was appointed by the admiralty to watch over the preparations of the enemy in Brest harbour, and give an account of the same to Admiral Colpoys, as circumstances should require: for it was a positive fact, that Sir Edward Pellew was appointed, and did actually cruise in Brest harbour. He was there the very day the armament was in motion; he was there the very day it sailed too, and he conveyed to Admiral Colpoys's look-out ship, the Marlborough, an account of their progress and their sailing; and he sent a farther intelligence of the loss of one of the enemy's ships (*Les Droits de L'Homme*) in coming out of the harbour. So it appears, that what ought to have been done, was done. But notwithstanding the diligence, intelligence, and skill of Admiral Colpoys, and notwithstanding the experience, courage, and ability of Sir Edward Pellew, their exertions were in vain. Though Sir Edward Pellew sent off intelligence, that the enemy sailed the 16th, it was not till the 24th of December that the look-out ship, the Marlborough, received the account of it: for the state of the weather was such, that it was impossible for Admiral Colpoys even to keep his own fleet under his observation; and the air was so hazy and so foggy, that the fog guns were continually fired. With regard to the enemy's sailing, the house was then in the real possession of the case, but so uncertain were both the officers alluded to with respect to the actual views of the enemy, that both Sir Edward Pellew and Admiral Colpoys believed they were undoubtedly destined for Portugal, and Sir Edward Pellew sent off to Admiral Vandeput, at Lisbon, to give him notice thereof. But Admiral Colpoys knowing, for the first time, on the 24th of December, that the enemy had
failed

failed on the 16th, and there having been a hurricane on the 17th, he believed the French ships might have been dispersed in the storm, and regulated his conduct accordingly. He thought it the wisest resolution not to follow them to Portugal or Ireland, because he was uncertain of their destination, and he therefore kept his station, on account of the chance of interrupting the return of all or part of the fleet in case of a dispersion by the storm. He recollected also, that the circumstance of the enemy's having failed would be known by the admiralty, and that, by keeping his station, he should have the means of receiving such authentic intelligence as he could not otherwise expect. If he were not able to keep his station by the prevalence of the south west winds off Brest, he was to rendezvous off the Lizard Point; and therefore by keeping as closely upon his station as he possibly could, he was provided for both alternatives, either for intercepting the enemy's fleet on the return of the whole or part to Brest, or receiving such an account of them from the admiralty, as might enable him to pursue them. Accordingly, being unable to keep his station off Brest, the fleet returned to the Lizard Point, in hopes of receiving some information, and was soon after driven up channel by the gales of wind, while the French found their way home in the mean time, though the hurricane still blew.

Mr. Grey, Mr. Sturt, and Mr. Fox supported the motion, and Mr. Wyndham and Mr. Pitt very strongly opposed it. The motion was lost upon the division by 201 against 62. A similar motion was made on the 16th of the month by the Earl of Albemarle in the House of Peers. Lord Spencer opposed the motion upon the general grounds of failure of information, and the unavoidable turn of the elements. Lord Carlisle was for the enquiry. The Earl of Moira, the Duke of Bedford, the Earl of Guildford, and the Marquis of Lansdowne, spoke strongly in support of the motion. The Earl of Liverpool, Lord Hood, Lord Auckland, and Lord Grenville, opposed it. The Earl Fitzwilliam said, that where there was blame, there ought to be enquiry. He lamented to have heard some expressions used in the debate of greater care being required for England than Ireland. Such sentiments would produce deep impressions on the minds of the people of that country: to which Lord Grenville assured the house, that they might set their minds at rest on the subject of Ireland, which so far from having been neglected, had been the object of particular attention. The motion was rejected by 74 against 14.

This determined resistance to all enquiry, and the repeated assurances made

by ministers of the security external and internal of Ireland, gave little satisfaction to the gentlemen on the opposition benches, and displeased some, who generally voted with government. They returned to the charge, and in both houses brought forward motions for enquiries into the internal state, and allaying the discontents in that distracted kingdom, which gave rise to very long and animated debates. On the 21st of March, the Earl of Moira introduced his promised motion by a very instructive and able speech: it became the more interesting, as that noble lord was known recently to have come from Ireland, so that his judgment could not be mislaid in seeing the real state of that kingdom, nor his candor and loyalty be suspected of misrepresenting it. He introduced his speech by a comment on the delicacy and importance of agitating questions, in which separate and independent legislatures, and questions, in which the privileges and the independence of each other, were involved. The extent and rapid increase of the discontents, which prevailed in Ireland, were subjects of sufficient notoriety to form the ground of his proceeding. He should abstain, therefore, from an enumeration of the particulars, which had come to his knowledge, and of which indeed he had recently been witness. In addressing his majesty, to the effect proposed, the house would not only exercise one of its most important privileges, but fulfil one of its most important duties. If it appeared that the counsellors, more immediately about his majesty's person, had not given that advice, which was calculated to insure the happiness and prosperity of Ireland, it was the duty of their lordships to approach the throne with advice more wise and salutary. But it might be said, what influence could such an address carry with it, to change the councils, by which Ireland was governed? To prove the influence of the British cabinet, he appealed to a recent fact; he meant the recall of the Earl Fitzwilliam, at a time when all Ireland concurred in the measures which he pursued, when that country gave the fairest prospect of tranquillity, and the surest pledge of assistance and support to Britain, in the arduous circumstances in which she was placed. It might be asked, what plan he wished to pursue? It was indicated in the motion he was about to make. When they addressed his majesty to interpose his paternal care and benevolence, the known goodness of his nature left no room for doubt as to the result. It was by temper, equity, and good faith, that the distractions of the Irish were to be appeased, and their affections conciliated.

No

No good could be expected from a prosecution of the present system. He was confident, however, that the adoption of measures, calculated to impress the people with confidence in government, would quickly call forth that fond affection of the inhabitants of Ireland to this country, which circumstances might cloud but could not extinguish; inspire that zeal so necessary in the present moment; and furnish those resources, which were requisite for the critical situation, in which the empire was placed, and the arduous contest in which it was engaged. On these grounds he rested the motion, which was, "That an humble address be presented to his majesty, praying that he would be graciously pleased to interpose his paternal and beneficent interference to allay the discontents, which at present subsist in his kingdom of Ireland, and which threaten the dearest interests of the British empire."

Lord Grenville said, the motion could not be adopted without breaking the solemn contract, which had been entered into between the two countries; without tearing asunder every bond of union and connection, and spreading distraction and division between the members of the British empire. He should, therefore, give his decided opposition to that motion, and every proposition of a similar tendency. The motion was unnecessary, and mischievous. Under the first head he expatiated on the measures that had been taken by his majesty, in the course of a reign of thirty-six years, from year to year, to remove every ground of uneasiness or discontent, which the situation of the Irish presented; the improved state of their commerce; their full enjoyment of civil and religious liberty; the Catholics admitted to the enjoyment of their property; a participation in every civil and social blessing, and even sharing in the right of voting for members of parliament. Nor were the people of Ireland insensible or ungrateful for the benefits they had received: their good dispositions, and contentment with their situation, he inferred from sundry circumstances, particularly their readiness to resist and repel the threatened invasion. With regard to the mischievous tendency of the motion, such an interference was obviously improper: it was impossible for them to proceed with sufficient information, which lay much more within the reach of their own legislature. The very interference of the British legislature, instead of remedying the discontents, which were alleged to prevail, would inflame them. It would induce the people of Ireland to imagine, that their own legislature was indifferent to their welfare, and thus stir up the divisions, which it was its object to appease. As the British legislature had given

given to Ireland the blessings of a free constitution, the best way to fix their attachment to it, was to engage their confidence in its favour.*

Earl Fitzwilliam admitted the improved state of Ireland. But whatever circumstances might have contributed to that prosperity, still there might remain room for something farther to be done. The noble secretary had said, that the people of Ireland were not distracted and discontented, but tranquil and happy. Was it a proof of this that acts of indemnity had been passed, in the Irish parliament, for proceedings beyond the law, which must have been called for by a conduct not very consistent with tranquillity. If no circumstances of disorder appeared, why were whole parishes, baronies, and even counties declared to be out of the king's peace? It was likewise stated, in the proceedings of the government in Ireland, that they were in certain districts disarming the people, from which it was evident they had been in arms.

The Earl of Liverpool approved the reasoning of Lord Grenville, and put the case of a motion being made in the Irish parliament, for the purpose of inducing it to interfere in the discussion of the great question of parliamentary reform or Catholic toleration in this country. How, he asked, would such

* On this occasion Lord Grenville rendered the following testimony of the grateful and loyal conduct of the Irish Catholics. (3 Parl. Deb. p. 101.) " He would desire any one to compare " the state of Ireland, as it was left by his majesty's ancestors with its present situation. He would " ask them to look at the Catholics, admitted to the exercise of their political rights, and to the " enjoyment of their property, to the participation of every civil and social blessing, restored " to that confidence in themselves which the laws had formerly destroyed; freely permitted to en- " gage in every species of commerce, and to apply themselves to every profession of honor and re- " putation, sharing the right of voting for members of parliament; and in their whole conduct " manifesting the effects of the benefits they had received in the best manner in which benefits " could operate on the human mind. He would desire their lordships to consider their conduct " upon the late occasion, when the enemy, deluded by false representations of the state of Ireland, " risked the last remnant of their fleet, and embarked an inferior army in the rash hope of being " able to succeed in their designs, by the disunion and disaffection of the inhabitants of Ireland. " For a proof of the good disposition of the Catholics upon that occasion, he could refer with " pleasure to the unexceptionable testimony of the reverend prelates, who worthily shewed them- " selves their guides in religious matters. (Here his lordship read some passages of the circular " letter from the Catholic bishop of Cork, which vide in Appendix, No. CII.) Thus it appeared " that his majesty's exertions had already been crowned with success; that this success was not per- " fectly complete was subject of regret; jealousies had appeared in some degree, but they had " been conciliated by the benevolence and the paternal care of his majesty. What stronger pledge " could be given of his majesty's intention to persevere in the same course, than what he had " already done?"

a motion

a motion be taken by the British parliament? The motion before their lordships seemed to him to be as mischievous in its tendency, as unconstitutional in its principle.

The Earl of Guildford could not admit that ministers had shewn any attention to the interests of Ireland, since the recall of Earl Fitzwilliam.

The Earl of Spencer was of opinion, that, if Lord Moira meant to do any substantial good by his motion, he ought to have gone much farther, and pointed out not only the nature of the discontents of the Irish nation, but the kind of measures, which ought to be resorted to for removing them.

The Marquis of Lansdown said, that, if the present were a subject of delicacy, ministers were the cause of it. The lord lieutenant of Ireland, as a minister, was accountable to the British as well as to the Irish parliament; and, therefore, they had a right to watch over the measures of his administration, and to censure or advise him, as they might deem proper. The motion now before their lordships was couched in terms so wise, so prudent, and so moderate, that he could scarcely have supposed that it could have been objected to. What was its purpose? It said, to his majesty, "Sire, you have, by a happy conduct, attached the people of Ireland to your family and government, by the same liberal and generous conduct, by which your grand-father gained the affections of the Highlands of Scotland. There is but one small cause of discontent still remaining, and it is only necessary, that you follow up those wise and salutary measures, which you have hitherto acted upon, to remove it." This was all that the motion proposed. If it were done in time, the measures might be successful, but it ought to be recollected, that the longer the delay, the greater the danger.

The Earl of Darnley opposed the motion. There were discontents in Ireland; but by no means among the general mass of the people.

The Duke of Bedford was sorry to say, that their lordships must cease to listen to the shifts of ministers, if their objects were to save the state from ruin. But it might be asked, what it was that he thought likely to restore happiness to the people of Ireland? "Restore to the people of Ireland the person you have recalled; give back to them the man whom they have tried, and whom they admire; act on the principles on which he acted, and then discontents will cease: if you do not, God only knows into how much more dreadful a state that unhappy country may be reduced."

Lord Grenville was of opinion, that the remedy, proposed by the noble duke,

duke, would have a tendency to create that which he seemed to dread ; a disturbance in Ireland ; for, that must necessarily be the tendency of recalling the present lord lieutenant of that kingdom. If the talents, the virtues, and the exertions of that noble lord were not sufficient to preserve the tranquillity of Ireland, he believed it would be out of the power of any other individual whatever.

The Earl of Moira rose up to make a few observations on the main point in question : the contentment or discontentment of the people of Ireland. As their lordships could not try the veracity of one noble lord against another, the only way they had to decide, was, to refer to facts. His lordship again appealed to the various facts already mentioned or alluded to, by himself and the Earl Fitzwilliam : parishes and whole counties out of the king's peace, and disarmed : insurrections in divers places, murmurs of discontent in all ; and a general assembly, within fifty yards of the castle of Dublin, headed by persons, whose talents and characters were of the very first class, and who, after the most mature deliberation that could be had on such an occasion, resolved and declared it to be their firm persuasion, that there was no chance for the salvation of Ireland, without an entire and immediate change in the whole system of executive government. After this the house divided, and the noble earl's motion was rejected by 72 against 20.

Two days after this discussion in the House of Peers, the subject was introduced, into the House of Commons, by Mr. Fox, who prefaced his speech by calling to mind the part he had taken in a recognition of the complete independence of Ireland, and how much he naturally considered himself to be bounden, in a particular manner, to follow up the principle on which it was founded. Though a variety of circumstances had concurred to produce the present disturbances in Ireland, he confined his observations to two or three leading points. These were, whether, in consequence of the concessions that had been made to Ireland, she had, in fact and substance, enjoyed the advantages of an independent legislature ? Whether, in that form of a free constitution which they had obtained, the people possessed that political weight to which they were entitled ? And, whether, their just voice and influence had been promoted, by the alteration which had been effected ? The people of Ireland were divided into two, though very unequal, classes ; the Catholics and the Protestants : neither of which enjoyed their just share of political power and influence. About nine years ago, a regular system was devised
for

for enslaving Ireland. A person of high consideration was known to say, that, 500,000*l.* had been expended to quell an opposition in Ireland, and that as much more must be expended in order to bring the legislature of that country to a proper temper. This systematic plan of corruption was followed up by a suitable system of measures. Hostile suspicions were insinuated, not only against the lower order of Catholics, but against men of the first respectability for character and fortune, and whose loyalty could not be questioned. Numbers were taken up for high treason; and, when acquitted, it appeared that no ground of suspicion could ever have been entertained against them. What could be the effect of such proceedings, but to convince the Catholics, that the concessions in their favor were extorted? That the hostile mind still existed, and that they were still marked out as the victims of the most cruel proscriptions and oppressions? Private animosities too arose, and produced those different classes of disturbers of the public peace, about which so much had been said. The remedies applied had tended to foment the disease. The authority of the laws was superseded. Those against whom it was thought convictions could be procured, were taken up; and those whom it would have been impossible to convict, were transported in great numbers, without the ceremony of a trial, or the form of conviction. It had been said, that the Catholics are entitled to vote for members of parliament. But except in the counties, Mr. Fox observed, the representation of Ireland was in what is here known by the name of close corporation. The Catholics were carefully excluded from the corporations; so that their privilege of voting for members of parliament was almost entirely evaded.

Mr. Fox next considered the grievances of the Presbyterians, the most numerous class, by far, in the North of Ireland. The discontents of the inhabitants of the northern parts of Ireland arose from two causes: one of them was the temporary pressure of a war, in which they were involved without interest in the contest, and the distresses which the calamities, with which it had been attended, had entailed upon their trade and commerce; the other had been the abuses, which they conceived to exist in the constitution, by which they are governed. The constitution of Ireland, they complain does not resemble that of Great Britain. Whoever imagined, that a practicable resemblance existed between the government of Ireland and the English constitution, would find, that the Irish government was a mirror in which the abuses of this constitution were strongly reflected. The jobbing system

of influence and patronage, for purposes of personal advantage in Ireland, was an abuse which totally destroyed the spirit of the form of government, and was an abuse not to be endured. To suppose that a large, industrious, active, and intelligent body of men could be governed against the principles they had imbibed, and the prejudices by which they were guided, was an idea, which history and human nature proved to be absurd. The interests of this country and of Ireland were the same. Its affairs were conducted by ministers, and the British cabinet, and it was the privilege of that house to advise his majesty. If he were to justify the measure by precedent, he might quote the case of an impeachment of the Earl of Lauderdale, by the English parliament, before the union, for the conduct of the government of Scotland. "But why," said Mr. Fox, "should I speak of forms, when the consequences of the discontents in Ireland may be a contest to be supported by Englishmen, and English money? I shall therefore move,

"That an humble address be presented to his majesty, that his majesty will be graciously pleased to take into his royal consideration, the disturbed state of his kingdom of Ireland, and to adopt such healing and lenient measures as may appear to his majesty's wisdom best calculated to restore tranquillity, and to conciliate the affections of all descriptions of his majesty's subjects, in that kingdom, to his majesty's person and government." This motion was seconded by Sir Francis Burdett.

Mr. Pitt asked Mr. Fox whether the parliament, by which the independence of Ireland was recognized, were more accommodating to the wishes of the Dissenters of the North, or to the Catholics of the South, than those of a subsequent period? Quite the contrary. Whatever alteration had since taken place, tended more and more to include both Dissenters and Catholics within the pale of civil and political liberty, than the principle recognized in 1782. But the main pillar of his defence of ministers, in their conduct towards Ireland, and ground of his objection to the present motion, was the unconstitutionality, the impropriety, and the dangers, to be apprehended from the interference of the British parliament in the affairs of Ireland; topics on which he expatiated with his usual ability; in which as to the main concession to be made, by way of remedy to the discontents and disturbances in Ireland, that of allowing to the Catholics the privilege of sitting in parliament, this could not be done, without reversing the whole of its present form, and new modelling the constitution from beginning to end: and to make that

that change when such principles were abroad in the world, and were even prevalent in the country, in which we lived, would be attended with the most dangerous consequences.

Colonel Fullarton, who had just come from Scotland, and that part of it which almost touches on Ireland, was astonished to find, in the metropolis, such an apparent indifference to the most alarming dangers; and wondered that so much time should be spent in debate, and so little in military preparation. General Hoche would find, in Ulster alone, 50,000 Irishmen united, with pikes in their hands, and arms concealed, busily employed in secret discipline, in order to qualify themselves for reinforcing the French army.

Mr. Courtney believed, that there were, in Ulster, 50,000 men with arms in their hands, ready to receive the French; but not to support them. The people in that province, almost all Presbyterians, had a strong spirit of liberty, and were attached to the popular, or, what had been called, the republican branch of the constitution, yet they were not to be confounded with Jacobins and banditti.

Lord Hawkebury repeated and applauded the arguments of Mr. Pitt.

Mr. Curwen thought, that the present motion was so far from being mischievous, that even the discussion it had occasioned would do good, inasmuch as it would shew the Irish nation, that there was a part, at least, of the British parliament, who were mindful of their interests.*

Lord

* If any thing could enhance the guilt of Mr. Arthur O'Connor's treason, it was that abandoned and reflex hypocrisy, with which he played off the appearance of the most constitutional loyalty, and was thus admitted to the sympathy and confidence of men, who really possessed it in an eminent degree. But in the political and ethic system, candor and uprightness are ever the earliest victims to duplicity, design, and baseness. *Et virtus vitio sub proprio latet.* In proof of these observations, Mr. O'Connor had so egregiously and basely at this time duped Sir Francis Burdett, as well as many other of the Whig party, that the honorable baronet in the unsuspecting generosity of his soul, thus boastfully pledged himself for the purest loyalty of his false and base friend. "One person now immured within the walls of a dungeon in Dublin Castle, I have the honor of being connected with, for honor, as well as happiness, I shall ever esteem it, by the strongest ties of friendship and affection, who I know to be incapable of treason to his country, (Good God! that treason to Ireland and the name of O'Connor should be preposterously coupled together!) as he is capable of every thing that is great, generous, and noble, for his country's good; a man whose whole conduct delineates the exact line of rectitude and honor; whose private virtues equal, they cannot surpass, the integrity of his public conduct; who is indeed endowed with every good as well as every great qualification; and of whom it may fairly be said, '*Nil non*

Lord Wycombe thought that the disturbances, which had taken place in Ireland, manifestly proved a disaffection to the British government. Conciliation instead of rigour, should have been tried; for it was time enough to employ force when mildness failed. He could have wished that the Irish parliament had been left, for the settlement of affairs, to themselves. But he well knew that, being for the most part at the beck of the English cabinet, they had lost the confidence of the nation. He adverted to, and commented upon the proclamation of General Lake.

He dreaded that if the British parliament did not interfere, we might lose Ireland altogether: a loss that would be more severe than the loss of America.

Mr. Hobhouse remarked, that the chancellor of the exchequer seemed to have presumed in the whole train of his reasoning, that it was the object of the motion to request the king's interference, exclusively of his Irish parliament. It only prayed his majesty, in connexion with the Irish legislature, to adopt measures of a lenient nature, with a view to appease the unhappy spirit of discontent which prevailed throughout the country. Mr. Fox's motion was negatived by 220 against 84 who supported it.

These warm debates in the British senate were in some measure brought forward and more heated from the complaints made in the Irish House of Commons, of the culpable indifference, which the administration of England had shewn to their safety and welfare.*

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“ laudandum aut dixit, aut sensit, aut fecit.” When such men become the objects of fear and hatred to government, it is not difficult to ascertain the nature of their government. But perhaps, Sir, it may be said, that I speak more like a discontented Irishman, than like a true friend to the interest of England. Sir, I speak like a friend to humanity and liberty; and like an enemy to cruelty and oppression. Sir, I believe the interests of Ireland and of this country to be the same. I believe it for the interest of both countries, that both should be free.” (2 Eng. Parl. Deb. p. 121.)

* Scarcely any man in the Irish commons possessed a larger share of personal confidence from the nation than Mr. G. Ponsonby: no man against whom less of democracy had ever been charged by his enemies. He had in the debate of the 22d of February, spoken the following language, which was replied to by the solicitor general in a manner, that shews the real issue of the government and opposition parties at that time in parliament. (17 *Parl. Debates*, p. 330) “ He confessed he had felt extreme concern and surprise at the return of the right honorable secretary from England, after a five weeks stay, with nothing to communicate to the house, but an undertaking on the part of the British minister, to endeavour to raise for the country a loan of a million and a half. This the right honorable gentleman had brought back with him in the place of a fleet and
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The proceedings on this side of the water relative to the state of Ireland, gave such offence to Dr. Duigenan, that on the 30th of March he gave notice

“ an army! Did the right honorable gentleman—did the British minister know the nature of the enemy we have to contend with? Did he know their resources—their energy—their courage—their discipline—their perseverance? Will he baffle such an enemy with a million and an half? Will he drive from our coasts an enemy that has vanquished Spain, Holland, Italy, and almost Germany, with a million and an half? Preserve Ireland from France! It may be done—but not by a million and an half! No, nor by 100,000*l.* raised from the salt, with which the beggar seasoned his miserable morsel! Pitiful financier, who can find resources only of this kind, and none in the bravery, spirit, and generosity of the Irish people. Such measures would never do to preserve Ireland in connexion with Britain. It was not his promise to the executive government by what means they should defend the country; he sat there as a member of parliament, rather to exercise a controlling function: but so deeply did he feel that the measures which were taken could not preserve Ireland, that he would venture to suggest some which he thought would. Those were measures not for raising a given sum of money, but for the much more momentous purpose of giving content and confidence to the people. Ill did they calculate the danger of the country, or the means to resist it, who looked at this time to any thing but the universal and enthusiastic force of the whole nation; and futile was every measure, which did not go to excite that powerful energy. He was far, indeed, from wishing to raise discontent or create jealousies that could impede the common defence. Whatever might be his opinion of the conduct of administration in Ireland, or of the culpable indifference which the administration of England had shewn to our safety, his object now was to strengthen their hands, by pointing out to them measures of which the efficacy in saving the country could not be doubtful. He was not afraid to mention those, whatever motives an interested party might attribute to him. The first, then, was a complete reform of the representation of the people in parliament. For other measures, let those answer who advised the government of the country to depend on them; for this he would be responsible. The second, was a perfect emancipation of the Catholics, and an abolition of all religious distinctions. The third was, a general equalization of commerce between the two countries. England should have no reserves to Ireland: if it were beneficial to England to preserve Ireland as an united country, she was now bound by interest as well as justice to give her a community of benefits and advantages. Temporising measures had been too long the policy with which she had managed this country; and to those temporising measures the present situation of the country was to be attributed. They must now be given up if the country be to be saved.”

Mr. Solicitor General, in a speech of great vehemence, replied to Mr. Ponsonby:—“ What was it come to, that in an Irish House of Commons they should listen to one of their own members degrading the character of an Irish gentleman by language which was fitted but for hallowing a mob? Had he heard a man uttering out of those doors such language as that by which the honorable gentleman had violated the decorum of parliament, he would have seized the ruffian by the throat, and dragged him to the dust! What were the house made of? Who could listen in patience to such abominable sentiments—sentiments which, thank God! were acknowledged by

“ no

tice in the House of Commons, that after the recess, he should bring forward a motion tending to refute the lying and malicious assertions made by Mr. Fox in the parliament of Great Britain.* On the 11th of April, 1797, when

“ no class of men in this country, except the execrable and infamous nest of traitors who were
 “ known by the name of United Irishmen, who sat brooding in Belfast over their discontents and
 “ treasons, and from whose publications he could trace word for word every expression the honor-
 “ able gentleman had used. But the men of Ireland are too wise and too loyal to be led astray by
 “ such artifices: the men of Ireland know whom they can trust—they know who have been hollow
 “ in the cause. The men of Ireland know who they are that are now armed in their cause to de-
 “ fend their lives, their property, their families, and their constitution, from the tremendous foe
 “ which threatens all: and the men of Ireland observe also those who are lying by in a suspicious
 “ apathy, as if wanting but to view the event of the contest. Who are they that have been fore-
 “ most in arming to face the enemy? Not, certainly, the honorable gentleman or his friends.
 “ None of them were foremost in the work of glory. But the honorable gentleman does not pass
 “ unnoticed; his conduct is marked—it has given a stamp to his character. He had intended not
 “ to have spoken in this debate; but it was impossible that a man standing in the situation in which
 “ he stood, could have heard the honorable gentleman in silence. He had wished to hear on this
 “ question the opinion of country gentlemen: he hoped, however, he had not forfeited his claim
 “ to that character by the office which he held.”

Mr. Ponsonby, in reply, observed, “ That it was the fashion of the time to charge treason on
 “ every man who differed from the minister on the subject of the war: he had that day been read-
 “ ing a pamphlet, in which Mr. Fox had been called a traitor, for advising a peace; but the
 “ deplorable situation to which the country had been reduced, was the best vindication of the wis-
 “ dom of his advice, and the most convincing proof of the folly of his accuser.”

Mr. Grattan observed, “ That as to the three subjects, he entirely agreed with his honorable
 “ friend—equality of trade; but still more, the complete and absolute emancipation of the Catho-
 “ lics, and a reform of the Commons House of parliament: that he was satisfied of their import-
 “ ance to the liberty and safety of the country; and he added, that if such subjects were held in
 “ this house to be treasonable, it was an argument decisive to prove the necessity of a speedy and
 “ complete reform. He added, that he agreed with the honorable baronet to augment the yeo-
 “ man corps 50,000 infantry in addition.”

* On this day also Mr. J. C. Beresford begged to correct a misstatement which had gone abroad,
 of what he had said in a former debate, on the insurrection bill. It had been stated in a country
 paper, and from thence copied into those of Dublin, that he had expressed a wish “ that the whole
 “ of the north of Ireland were in open rebellion, that the government might cut them off.” This
 had been very assiduously circulated, to the detriment of his character; and was, he could confi-
 dently say, a falsehood. What he had said was, “ that there were certain parts of the north of
 “ Ireland in a state of concealed rebellion; and that he wished those places were rather in a state
 of open rebellion, that the government might see the rebellion, and crush it.” I have noticed this,
 as it has been a frequent imputation against government, that it was their wish to goad the people
 into rebellion, for the accursed purposes of forfeitures, punishments, and extermination.

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the house met after the last adjournment, Mr. Grattan expressed his expectation, that the learned doctor who had given notice of his intention to make a motion relative to the propositions in the English parliament offered by Lord Moira and Mr. Fox, would mention in due time the day on which he meant the attack; it being his (Mr. Grattan's) fixed opinion, that the propositions offered by those illustrious persons, were not only strictly constitutional and consistent with the most extensive idea of Irish independence, but absolutely necessary for the safety of the empire, and the continuation of the connection. He added, that the speeches, as set forth in some of the public prints, and attributed to those distinguished characters, were perfectly warranted by the facts, and in every point of view just and seasonable; as such he was ready to defend them.

And on the same day Mr. Secretary Pelham presented the following message from his excellency.*

“ CAMDEN.

“ GENTLEMEN,

“ IN pursuance of the resolution entered into by the House
“ of Commons, on the 1st of March, 1797, for raising towards the supply
“ granted to his majesty, the sum of 3,395,697*l.* upon the terms therein men-
“ tioned, I have given such directions as appeared to me most proper to carry
“ the same into execution; and I am sorry to inform you, that it is found, after
“ the most diligent endeavours exerted for the purpose, that the sum intended
“ to be raised by the said resolution, cannot be obtained according to the
“ terms thereof. I therefore thought it incumbent on me, that this house
“ should be made acquainted therewith, not doubting, that the Commons of
“ Ireland, attentive to the honor of his majesty's government, and to the
“ safety of the kingdom, will take such measures, as shall be most prudent to
“ carry the intention of that salutary resolution into effect.”

And on the 19th of the month another message was delivered by his excellency to the house, which shews the cautionary measures the government had in the mean time taken.†

“ CAMDEN.

“ UPON the information of the meetings of certain per-
“ sons, styling themselves United Irishmen, for the purpose of concerting

* 17 Parl. Debates, p. 466.

† Ibid. p. 477.

“ plans

“ plans for the subversion of the constitution, and of the established govern-
 “ ment of this kingdom, two committees in the town of Belfast have been
 “ arrested, and their papers seized: they contain matter of so much import-
 “ ance to the public welfare, that I have directed them to be laid before the
 “ House of Commons, and I recommend it to them to take the same into their
 “ serious consideration. I shall, in the mean time, pursue those measures,
 “ which have received your sanction and approbation, with unremitting vi-
 “ gour, and employ the force entrusted to me in the most efficient manner
 “ for the protection of his majesty’s faithful subjects against all treasonable
 “ designs, and for bringing to condign punishment those who are endeavour-
 “ ing to overturn the constitution, and betray this country into the hands of
 “ her enemies.” Upon which Mr. Pelham observed, that the proper way for
 the house to take these papers into consideration, would be to refer them
 to a committee of secrecy. The papers, which they would have to consider
 were of such a nature, that it was probable they might hereafter be produced
 in a court of justice, for the conviction of the persons in whose custody they
 had been found; to publish their contents would, therefore, tend to defeat
 the ends of public justice.

Mr. Grattan was against a secret committee. It was reasonable to sup-
 pose, from the nature of this communication from his excellency, that the
 lives and properties of the subject were to be subjected to new measures of
 coercion; it was therefore highly unjust, that the committee, who were to
 suggest those measures, should be secret: for himself, he would never agree
 to commit the people of Ireland to the merey of a secret committee, which
 would be in effect, to put their lives and fortunes into the hand of the mi-
 nister, and this too at a time when the misconduct of the minister in both
 countries was the subject of very general complaint, and when both coun-
 tries, almost unanimously, demanded their dismissal. He was the more in-
 clined to resist this application of ministers for a secret committee, of which
 their malignity against the people might make a convenient instrument,
 because he entirely disapproved of their past conduct, and detested that system,
 by which they had misgoverned the country; because he saw that all their
 measures, whether parliamentary or military, tended equally to increase the
 calamities of the people; and because he saw that each successive measure
 they had tried, was more unjust and unconstitutional than the former.

Mr. Pelham’s motion for a secret committee was put and carried: the com-
 mittee

mittee was ordered to consist of 15, and to be appointed by ballot.* An adjournment of some weeks took place to accommodate those members, and many they were, whose professional duties called them on the circuits.

Never was there a more critical and awful moment to the internal state of a kingdom: the change of the popular mind was extreme. Armagh had been for three or four years back the centre of religious acrimony, bigotted cruelty, and continued outrage. The progress of the union had entirely done away these ferocious effects: but so little at this time was the bond of union considered treasonable, that at the Armagh assizes, when the spirit and tendency of it were brought before the court on the trial of *Hanlon* and *Nogher*, who were charged of tendering an unlawful oath or engagement to become one of an unlawful, wicked, and seditious society, called *United Irishmen*, the prisoners were acquitted: the counsel not only defended, but commended the institution, though the judge thought the obligation illegal under the late act of parliament.† The acquittal of Dogherty, and the confinement and profe-

* The method of appointing this committee was, for each member to give in his list of 15, and the committee was thus appointed of the following persons, who had the majority of the ballots, viz. Mr. Pelham, Mr. D. La Touche, Mr. Ogle, Mr. J. C. Beresford, Mr. J. Stewart, Mr. J. Foster, Mr. Commissioner Beresford, Lord Castlereagh, Mr. Solicitor General, Mr. Prime Serjeant, Mr. Attorney General, Mr. Maxwell, Mr. Alexander, Mr. D. Browne, Lord Boyle.

† It is fitting, that the light in which this bond of union was at different periods represented to, and viewed by the people, should be known, in order that the real guilt and malice of the original and reflex traitors, may be separated from the impetuosity and enthusiasm of many friends to civil and constitutional liberty, that were originally engaged in it from honorable and meritorious motives, though some of them were afterwards seduced *specie recti* to hold *their footing*, when they perceived themselves gone further than they were aware of: and when coercion militated so powerfully against receding.

On Saturday, the 19th, the assizes ended, having lasted an entire week. There were in the jail to the amount of 28 persons, charged with offences usually imputed to United Irishmen, of whom, however, two trials only were brought forward. In the former, a seditious soldier, who was brought forward to prosecute Dogherty, was, upon Dogherty's acquittal, put into the dock in his place, to abide his trial for perjury. Since that the grand juries found bills against him, and he remained in custody to abide his trial.

The only other trial was that of the King against Hanlon and Nogher, charged with contemptuously, maliciously, and feloniously tendering to the prosecutor an unlawful oath or engagement, to become one of an unlawful, wicked, and seditious society called United Irishmen.

One witness only was produced in support of this indictment, a soldier of the 24th light dragoons, of the name of Fisher, who swore to the administration of an oath, " to be united in brotherhood

cution of the suborned witness, who alone appeared against him, the anticipated confidence of the acquittal of Hanlon and Nogher, and the backwardness of government in bringing any more to trial, had created a species of triumph in the popular party, either of the rectitude or strength of their cause. On the same day (14th of April), which was the last day but one of the assizes, the sheriff of Armagh, at the request of several of the first gentlemen of the county, convened a meeting, for the purpose of framing a proper address to his majesty on the critical situation of affairs, claiming redress in a respectful manner against the grievances, under which they laboured; and some anonymous and rebellious demagogue published a very inflammatory paper, in order to excite the popular spirit beyond the claims of that rational and sober freedom, which the British constitution by its natural and unchecked workings never fails to afford.*

It appears evident, that at this time the publication of many opinions and sentiments, which at former periods had been considered laudable and meri-

“ to pull down the head clergy, and half-pay officers.” He, upon his cross examination, said, that the obligation had been shewn and read to him, in a small book of four leaves, which he had read and would know again. The Constitution of the United Irishmen was then put into his hands by the defendant’s counsel, and he admitted the test contained in it to be the same that he had taken.

On the part of the prisoners, A.T. Stewart, Esq. of Acton, was examined and cross-examined by the crown. The sum of his testimony was, that this society had made a rapid progress through the people of all religious ranks and classes; that before its introduction into that country, the most horrible religious persecutions existed, attended with murder and extirpation; that since its introduction these atrocities had subsided, as far as he could learn. He admitted he had heard of murders laid to their charge, but could hardly believe such charges, as he conceived them incompatible with any thing he ever could learn of the principles or consequences of their institution.

The jailor was also examined, who said, that fewer persons had been sent to him upon charges of racking or robbing houses, or of murder than before, and that he understood the religious parties began to agree better together, and to fight less.

There was no other material evidence. Mr. Curran spoke an hour and three quarters, in defence of the United Irishmen.—That he was delighted to find, after so many of them had been immured in dungeons, without trial, that at length the subject had come fairly before the world—and that instead of being a system of organised treason and murder, it proved to be a great bond of national union, founded upon the most acknowledged principle of law, and every sacred obligation due to our country and Creator.

Mr. Baron George gave his opinion decidedly, that the obligation was, under the act of parliament, *illegal*. The Jury withdrew, and acquitted the prisoner, and thus ended the assizes of Armagh.

* Both are to be seen in the Appendix, No. CIII.

torious,

torious, were deemed turbulent, seditious, or treasonable. The revolutionary doctrines of 1688, in their particular bearings upon the existing circumstances of 1797, were sure marks of reprobation, and from the report* of the secret committee, appear to have been considered criminal in their nature, as well as in their application. When Mr. Pelham communicated the report of the secret committee to the house, on the 10th of May, he observed, that what had then transpired must convince every man, that it was not legislation which should be resorted to, to repress this daring and dark conspiracy, but to those strong measures which the executive government had already adopted, with the approbation of the house. That report justified in the fullest extent those measures, and at the same time called on the gentlemen of that house, and on every loyal subject, to strain every nerve to put down that society: nor did he think, formidable as they might appear, that there was any reason to fear, that the loyalty of the country and the force of the state, would not be fully sufficient to crush them. Their numbers, it was reasonable to believe, had been greatly exaggerated in these papers; as it was plain, that they tried every mode to keep up the spirits of their deluded followers, as well by fallacious statements of their force, as by the expectation of foreign assistance. For his own part, he believed the great body of the people were loyal, and he should be proud to exert every power he possessed in opposing that band of daring traitors. He believed, that among the members who formed the society of united Irishmen, there were many much less criminal than others; many he believed might have been seduced to join them by the specious pretexts of reform, &c. and might have continued among them from the ignorance of their true designs, which, it appeared, they were so desirous of concealing from the great body of their members: but he hoped, that the publication of that report would open their eyes, and shew

* 17 Parl. Deb. p. 522. The committee again take occasion to observe, that it appears from these papers, that the united Irishmen made a pretext of reform and emancipation, to cover a design to subvert instead of amending the constitution, to confiscate property and extinguish the possessors of it; and this they infer, arguendo, from the circumstance, that these two objects have not been mentioned in these papers as the end of their institution. In further corroboration of this opinion, they transcribe a paper called the Donaghadee Resolutions, in which it is emphatically stated "to have been the opinion of the best statesmen, philosophers, and divines, that all power originates with the people; that when tyrants usurp power, or governors legitimately constituted degenerate into tyrants, it becomes the right and the duty of the people to take arms to wrest that power from the hands which abuse it, and restore it to those to whom it of right belongs, &c. &c."

them the danger and the crimes into which they were hastening. He concluded by moving, that this report be communicated to the committee of the lords, and that it be printed, which was ordered accordingly.

The 15th of May, 1797, was a day of peculiar importance to the fate of Ireland. The great question of parliamentary reform stood for that day. Mr. W. B. Ponsonby had most urgently been pressed by government not to bring forward that subject in the moment of so alarming a ferment of the public mind. He, however, differed from the gentlemen on the Treasury Bench upon the propriety of agitating the question at that particular juncture, deeming it indispensably necessary then, above all other times; to agitate and to adopt that measure as the only efficient means of ensuring the restoration of peace, confidence, and prosperity to the country. The galleries had overflowed at an early hour, and the speaker took the chair precisely at four o'clock, when Lord Castlereagh pre-occupied the attention of the house by moving, that the address of the lords on the subject of the treasonable papers, be then taken into consideration. The address contained strong expressions of the loyalty and affection of the house; alluded in very strong terms to the enormity and extent of that traitorous conspiracy; thanked his majesty for the measures which had been already taken for restoring the due observation of the laws, and recommended to his adoption the most severe measures for the complete suppression of these dangerous disorders. His lordship animadverted on the danger of the conspiracy with much vehemence, and concluded by a motion, "that the commons should agree with their lordships in that address."

Mr. Smith moved an amendment, that his majesty would use conciliatory measures to remove every pretext of discontent from the well-disposed, as well as measures of coercion for the prevention and punishment of conspiracy and treason; urging the necessity of correcting abuses, as well as adopting strong laws to repress disaffection.

This introduced much very animated conversation from Mr. George Ponsonby, Mr. Fletcher, Mr. Jephson, Mr. Grattan, and Mr. Hoare, who supported the amendment; and the attorney general, Mr. Denis Browne, Mr. Egan, Sir B. Roche, Mr. Alexander, Messrs. J. and M. Beresford, Mr. Ogle, Mr. Toler, and Mr. Amneity, who opposed it.*

The

* 7 Parl. Deb. p. 529. The most contentious topic in the debate was an expression which fell from Mr. Fletcher, in the course of his speech, in which he said, that if coercive measures were to be

The question of parliamentary reform was brought on by Mr. William Brabazon Ponsonby, by first reading his several propositions, before he specifically moved any of them. They were to the following effect:

“ *Resolved*, That it is indispensably necessary to a fundamental reform of
 “ the representation, that all disabilities, on account of religion, be for ever
 “ abolished; and that Catholics shall be admitted into the legislature, and
 “ all the great offices of state, in the same extent, &c. as Protestants now
 “ are.

“ That it is the indispensable right of the people of Ireland to be fully and
 “ fairly represented in parliament.

“ That in order that the people may be fully enabled to exercise that right,
 “ the privilege of returning members for cities, boroughs, &c. in the present
 “ form shall cease; that each county be divided into districts, consisting of
 “ 6000 houses each, each district to return two members to parliament.

“ That all persons possessing freehold property to the amount of 40s. per
 “ annum; all possessed of leasehold interests, of the annual value of —; ;
 “ all possessed of a house, of the value of —; ; all who have resided for a
 “ certain number of years in any great city or town, following a trade; and
 “ all who shall be free of any city, &c. by birth, marriage, or servitude, shall
 “ vote for members of parliament.

“ That seats in parliament shall endure for — number of years.”

Mr. Pelham applauded the candid manner, in which the honorable mover

be pursued, the whole country must be coerced, for the spirit of insurrection had pervaded every part of it.

Mr. M. Beresford ordered the clerk to take down these words, and the gallery was instantly cleared. When strangers were again admitted, the debate on the address still continued, and in the course of it Mr. J. C. Beresford thought himself called on to defend the secret committee against an assertion, which had fallen from Mr. Fletcher in the course of his speech. The assertion was, in substance, that he feared the people would be led to look on the report of the committee, as fabricated rather to justify the past measures of government, than to state facts!

Mr. Fletcher contended, that he had a right to animadvert on the report, but disclaimed any design of imputing any thing unfair to the members of that committee individually.

In the course of the altercation, which followed on this subject, Mr. Toler threatened, and actually did move an abstract resolution, declaring, that the imputation conveyed in those words (of Mr. Fletcher) was an unfounded calumny on the report. He was at length, however, persuaded to withdraw his motion. The house then divided on Mr. Smith's amendment, which was lost without a division.

had

had put the house completely into possession of his whole plan; but thought the question ought not to be agitated, whilst a part of the country was in a state of rebellion, and a most dangerous conspiracy existed in it, as appeared by the report of the secret committee. He therefore moved an adjournment. A very heated debate* ensued, which lasted till five o'clock in the morning, when the house divided, 170 for the adjournment, and 30 only against it.

†The rigor of military government was first enforced under General Lake
in

* This subject having been so often debated, I repeat no part of the debate. The only new point made seemed to be the actual effects of the coercion, that had for some time been systematically adopted. The language of government was, *the people must be subdued, before they shall be relieved*: and neither Catholic emancipation nor parliamentary reform can be now granted, because they are made the pretences for insurrection and rebellion. Mr. Grattan, who spoke last in the debate, said (17 *Parl. Deb.* p. 567), “ I have in my hand a paper signed by nine hundred persons, “ considerable men in business, and northern merchants, containing the following resolutions, in “ substance: ‘ That they conceive the cause of the present discontent to be the miserable state of “ the representation; that the discontent and suffering will continue until parliament shall be re- “ formed, and that they will persist in the pursuit of that object, and will not lose sight of it by “ cavils at the plan, but will expect and be satisfied with such a plan as does substantially restore to “ the community the right of electing the House of Commons—securing its independence against “ the influence of the crown—limiting the duration of parliament, and extending to his majesty’s “ subjects the privileges of the constitution, without distinction of religion.’ Such a plan we offer “ you; that is our plan of peace, our idea of strength and union against a foreign enemy: we con- “ ceive, that all your other plans have failed; you tried them—you tried your revenue, and you “ failed; you tried your public credit—it has failed; you tried your armed force—it has failed; “ you have attempted to combat democracy by armies, and you failed; you sent armies against “ your enemies to combat that principle, and you failed; you sent armies against your people, and “ you failed. You conquered your laws indeed; you conquered the person of the subject—but you “ could not subdue his mind—you could not conquer the passion or the principle: on the contrary, “ you inflamed both. What then remains? Try this plan—reform the parliament.”

† As Mr. Grattan viewed the subject he thus enumerated the effects produced by that system of coercion, which he called upon the government to change. “ But,” said he, “ gentlemen chiefly “ rely on the report of the secret committee, and alledge, that a conspiracy appears from that re- “ port to have established itself in a way so extensive and formidable, as to render any conciliatory “ measure inadmissible; ‘ they must be subdued before they shall be relieved:’ such are the words “ of gentlemen—dangerous and inconsiderate words! But from that very report, I draw a con- “ clusion diametrically opposite; from that report, I conclude, that parliamentary reform is not “ merely eligible, but absolutely indispensable; in that report, and from the speeches of gentlemen, “ we learn, that a conspiracy has existed for some years; that it was composed originally of persons “ of no powerful or extensive influence; and yet these men, under prosecution and discounte- “ nance, have been so extended as to reach every county in the kingdom; to levy a great army; “ to

in the northern district, where he commanded: many seizures of concealed arms and ammunition were made. In the execution of these orders, some barbarous outrages were committed by the military, which tended to inflame and exasperate the minds of the people, which were already too highly inflamed. Not only some women and children had been murdered, but the houses of some respectable persons were pillaged and demolished, upon the bare suspicion of their being United Irishmen.* Great discontent was created in

“ to provide arms and ammunition; and to alarm, as the report states, the existence of the government, with the number of its profelytes, procured by these two popular subjects—parliamentary reform, and Catholic emancipation. It appears, then, that they have recruited by these topics, and have spread their influence, notwithstanding your system of coercion every where; that notwithstanding your convention bill of 1793, that this convention has grown; that notwithstanding your gunpowder act, it has armed and increased its military stores under that act; that notwithstanding your insurrection act, another bill to disarm, it has greatly added to its magazines; and that notwithstanding the suspension of the habeas corpus bill, and General Lake’s proclamation, it has multiplied its profelytes. I should have asked, had I been on the secret committee, whether the number of united Irishmen had not increased very much since General Lake’s proclamation, and by General Lake’s proclamation. It appears, I say, from that report, that just as your system of coercion advanced, the United Irishmen advanced; that the measures you took to coerce, strengthened; to disperse, collected; to disarm, armed; to render them weak and odious, made them popular and powerful: whereas, on the other hand, you have loaded parliament and government with the odium of an oppressive system, and with the further odium of rejecting these two popular topics, which you allow are the most likely to gain the heart of the nation, and be the beloved objects of the people.”

Mr. Grattan closed his speech and the debate with these words: “ We have offered you our measure; you will reject it: we deprecate yours; you will persevere: having no hopes left to persuade or dissuade, and having discharged our duty, *we shall trouble you no more, and after this day shall not attend the House of Commons.*” 17 Parl. Deb. p. 570.

* It is not my object to rehearse every feat of cruelty or outrage committed either by the military or the rebels: there are too many, alas, on both sides. I would not be thought to hazard general assertions loosely; and therefore merely mention some few instances, which began as early as the Spring of 1797: In the barony of Lower Orion, in the county of Armagh, one Birch, under a military escort with his hands tied behind him, was cut down by the serjeant, and died of his wounds; the pretext was, that some countrymen attracted by curiosity came near them and intended to attempt a rescue: and on the night of the wake of the deceased, some soldiers, under command of Colonel Sparrow, broke into the house, took out the corpse, and severely wounded and mangled those who were in the house. The colonel was tried and found guilty, though he had the king’s pardon in his pocket, which he produced upon the sentence being pronounced against him. A party of the Essex fencibles burnt the house and furniture of one Potter, a respectable farmer, because his wife, who had seven infant children, either would not or could not tell where her husband was.

in the north, by a proclamation published by General Lake on the 13th of March, 1797,* which was made in consequence of a letter written to him by Mr. Pelham, setting forth the alarming and desperate state of the north. The newspaper, called the *Morning Star*, which was published at Belfast, was the paper into which all the bold attacks upon the ministers and publications in favor of liberty found their way: it was of course extremely obnoxious to government. The proprietors of it, Robert and William Simms, had been some time (i. e. from the 5th of February) committed to Newgate in Dublin, under the suspension of the *Habeas Corpus Act*. The person, who then conducted the paper having been required, refused to insert a paragraph in it, which reflected on the loyalty of the people of Belfast: the next morning a detachment of the military issued very orderly from the barracks, attacked the printing office, and utterly demolished every part of it.† Several other outrages were committed by the military on the inhabitants of Belfast: the house of Cunningham Gregg, Esq. was destroyed with impunity, and without any pretext or provocation for such an outrage. The harshness of this military despotism drove many to desperation, who had till then been loyally and peaceably disposed. No European nation more keenly sympathizes with the sufferings of their unoffending relatives than the Irish; none more prompt to make the resentment of them a common cause. It has been before ‡ remarked, by the king's attorney general, that there is no nation under the sun, that love equal and indifferent justice better than the Irish; or will rest better satisfied with the execution thereof, although it be against themselves. If these sentiments still mark the national characteristic (experience daily shews they do), it is difficult to prove, that the system of sending unarraigned persons on board the tenders, and flagellating and torturing untried individuals to extort confessions either of themselves or others, of burning and destroying the houses and property of persons either slightly suspected, or maliciously

was. Another party of the same regiment quartered at Enniskillen, broke open the house of Farmer Durman, at two o'clock, murdered one and wounded another of his sons whilst in bed. The like outrages were committed at Coolairll upon one Price an innkeeper, and his daughter, who were both dangerously wounded.

* Both this letter and the proclamation may be seen in the Appendix, No. CIV.

† It is credibly reported, that after the destruction of the *Morning Star* Printing Office, an officer, high in command, exclaimed in triumph, "We may now do as we please, for as the *Star* is demolished, no other paper dares to publish any act we may do."

‡ Viz. Sir John Davies, 1 vol. p. 22.

charged,

charged, of inflicting punishments on men, committing outrages on women, and devastating houses, villages, and whole districts with impunity, under the semblance of law and countenance of government, should not goad a people of warm and quick sensibility into hatred, revenge, and frenzy, rather than reclaim them from rashness, or reduce them to mildness and obedience. It was however the avowed opinion of government, that the treason was in the course of the winter 1796, and the spring of 1797, too deeply rooted to yield to the remedy of the law, even where it was put in force by the magistrates with activity.* Such an assumption was prominently calculated to open the door to the strongest measures, and the general command given to the civil and military officers by proclamation to use the exertions of their utmost force, and to oppose with their full power all such as should resist them in the execution of their duty, which was to search for and seize concealed arms, admitted of a latitude of power, not very likely to be temperately regulated by raw troops let in upon a country denounced rebellious, and devoted to military rigor, as a necessary substitute for the inefficacy of the municipal law. A regiment of cavalry, called the *Antient Britons*, commanded by Sir Watkin William Wynne, were at all times prominently conspicuous for the rigorous execution of any orders for devastation, destruction, or extermination. They were marked for it by the rebels, and in the course of the rebellion they were cut to pieces almost to a man.

In this convulsed state of the nation, the difference of opinion between the two parties in parliament was not upon the necessity, but upon the likeliest mode of restoring tranquillity. The opinions and measures of government were uniformly adopted, and unexceptionably acted upon: they therefore produced their effects. Whether or no an opposite system of conciliation, if acted upon, would have prevented the calamities, which afterwards ensued, still rests in doubt, as every theory essentially must.† The secret committee have

* Report of secret committee in 1788. 17 Com. Journ. p. 899.

† If an individual from close attention to all the circumstances of the late transactions may presume to offer his opinion, it is, that a system of conciliation would not have diverted some of the leading and most inveterate traitors from their ambitious and nefarious projects; but it would have defeated them by regaining and securing to government the great mass of the people, without whose concurrence these arch-rebels must have dropped their iniquitous designs. They consequently wished for nothing more than a continuance and even aggravation of that system of coercive irrita-

have made an assertion, though without any voucher for its truth, that contradicts the evidence of Mr. Stewart of Acton above referred to given on oath, namely, that since the establishment of the union the atrocities formerly so frequent in those parts had greatly subsided. Of the quantity of arms, which appeared by their own reports to be in the hands of the disaffected, comparatively few were obtained by the search then made in Ulster by General Lake's orders; and it is also to be observed, that previously to, and during the circuit which took place in the month of April, 1797, acts of violence of every description became more frequent, and were at the same time so systematically directed, with a view to stop the course of criminal justice against the United Irishmen, that the crown prosecutions in the disturbed counties proved from their failure an encouragement rather than a restraint upon the treasonable projects of the party.

The report of the secret committee was soon after followed by a proclamation, which after reciting many acts of outrage and rebellion that had been committed, and offering pardon, with certain exceptions, to all persons guilty of the said offences, who should surrender within the period of a month, and give security for their future good behaviour, declared, that the civil power had proved ineffectual, and that it became necessary to employ the military force for the immediate suppression of such rebellious attempts. Notwithstanding which measure of mercy and warning to the disaffected, in the latter end of May, a general insurrection in Ulster was decided on, and the plan of attack for each county arranged.

That proclamation, which was published on the 17th of May, was sent to Lord Carhampton, with a letter from Mr. Pelham, on the 18th of May, in consequence of which his lordship immediately published the following order. " In obedience to the order of the lord lieutenant in council, it is the " commander in chief's commands, that the military do act* without waiting
" for

tion. The alienation of every heart from government was an accession to their strength. I do not attribute this determined malice to every one of the gentlemen, who unfortunately engaged in the union. I believe that a change of system would have reclaimed several.

* A very savage abuse of this latitude of power appears in the following instance. Information had been lodged, that a house near Newry contained concealed arms; a party of the Ancient Britons repaired to the house; but not finding the object of their search, they set it on fire: the peasantry of the neighbourhood came running from all sides to extinguish the flames, believing the
fire

“ for directions from the civil magistrates in dispersing any tumultuous or
 “ unlawful assemblies of persons threatening the peace of the realm, and the
 “ safety of the lives and properties of his majesty’s loyal subjects wherefoever
 “ collected.”* We are further informed by the secret committee, that the
 intention of a general insurrection transpired, and was defeated by the active
 exertions of the army; notwithstanding which a partial rising did take place
 near the mountains in the county of Down, where the insurgents, finding
 themselves unsupported, soon dispersed. The effect of the measures then
 adopted was immediately felt; the arms of the disaffected by necessary acts
 of coercion were collected throughout the province in great numbers; the
 loyal were encouraged to declare themselves; such as had been misled, came
 in crowds to take the benefit of the proclamation of pardon, which was now
 extended for another month; outrage ceased, and public confidence was so
 far restored throughout Ulster in the course of the months of July and Au-
 gust, that the laws were administered with effect in the different counties
 during the summer circuit, and the manufacturing industry of the country
 was restored to its usual vigor during the remainder of that year: and during
 and subsequent to the summer assizes, the civil authority was found through-
 out Ulster fully adequate to the preservation of the public peace, and all mi-
 litary interference was generally discontinued from that period.

Henceforward also the inferior societies of United Irishmen, in general,
 discontinued their meetings; the people applied themselves to their ordinary
 occupations; and though some of the higher committees were kept alive by
 the active leaders in the treason, yet for several months only a proportion of
 the counties of Ulster were represented in the provincial committee; the
 others refused to send delegates; little money was collected; they could not
 succeed in reviving the inferior societies; although they encouraged each
 other in the hopes of bringing the lower orders of the people again into
 action in case the enemy should land, they were not able to make any im-

fire to have been accidental; it was the first military conflagration in that part of the country. As
 they came up they were attacked in all directions, and cut down by the fencibles: thirty were
 killed, among whom were a woman and two children. An old man of seventy years of age, seeing
 the dreadful slaughter of his neighbours and friends, fled for safety to some adjacent rocks; he was
 pursued, and though on his knees imploring mercy, his head was cut off at a blow.

* The proclamation and Mr. Pelham’s letter, which preceded and occasioned this order, are to be
 seen in the Appendix, No. CV.

pression of consequence till the insurrection in Leinster was on the point of breaking forth ; such the committee stated to be the beneficial consequences arising from the measures adopted in the year 1797. The leaders of the treason, apprehensive lest the enemy might be discouraged from any further plan of invasion, by the loyal disposition manifested throughout Munster and Connaught on their former attempt, determined to direct all their exertions to the propagation of the system in those provinces, which had hitherto been but partially infected. With this view emissaries were sent into the south and west in great numbers, of whose success in forming new societies and administering the oaths of the union, there were in the course of some few months, but too evident proofs in the introduction of the same disturbances and enormities into Munster, with which the northern province had been so severely visited.

In May, 1797, although numbers had been sworn both in Munster and Leinster, the strength of the organization, exclusively of Ulster, lay chiefly in the metropolis, and in the neighbouring counties of Dublin, Kildare, Meath, Westmeath, and the King's County. It was very observable, that the counties, in which defenderism had prevailed, easily became converts to the new doctrines ; and in the summer of 1797 the usual concomitants of this species of treason, namely, the plundering houses of arms, the fabrication of pikes, and the murder of those who did not join their party, began to appear in the midland counties.

In order to engage the peasantry in the southern counties, particularly in the counties of Waterford and Cork, the more eagerly in their cause, the United Irishmen found it expedient in urging their general principles, to dwell with peculiar energy on the supposed oppressiveness of tithes (which had been the pretext for the old *White Boys'* insurrections.) And it is observable, that in addition to the acts of violence usually resorted to by the party for the furtherance of their purposes, the ancient practice of burning the corn, and houghing the cattle of those, against whom their resentment was directed, was revived, and very generally practised in those counties.

With a view to excite the resentment of the Catholics, and to turn that resentment to the purposes of the party, fabricated and false tests were represented as having been taken to exterminate Catholics, and were industriously disseminated by the emissaries of the treason throughout the provinces of Leinster, Munster, and Connaught. Reports were frequently circulated
amongst

amongst the ignorant of the Catholic persuasion, that large bodies of men were coming to put them to death. This fabrication, however extravagant and absurd, was one among the many wicked means, by which the deluded peasantry were engaged the more rapidly and deeply in the treason.

This honorable testimony of the loyalty of the Catholics of the three provinces of Leinster, Munster, and Connaught, is an authentic admission by the secret committee, that the Catholic body was not at all implicated in that rebellion and treason, which had then been so repeatedly proclaimed to exist in the north. It also proves the execrable hypocrisy, with which those leaders of the rebellion endeavoured to connect themselves with every description of persons, to seize on their passions, and direct them to their own traitorous purposes. Their objects were to prepare the people by disaffection to unite with the enemy in case of a future landing, and to dispose the enemy to take advantage of the discontents of the people, whilst they were in actual fermentation.

In the spring of 1797 the executive of the union thinking the French dilatory in their preparations, dispatched Mr. Lewins as a confidential person to press for assistance. This agent left London in March, and proceeded to Hamburgh, but did not reach Paris till the end of May or beginning of June, from which time he continued to be the accredited minister of the Irish Union to the French Directory. And in the summer of 1797 the executive of the Union, apprehensive lest a premature insurrection in the north before the promised succours from France could arrive might disappoint their prospects, thought it necessary to send a second agent to the French government, to urge with increased earnestness, that the promised assistance should be immediately sent. He left Dublin in the end of June, and presented himself with the necessary letters of credence to the French minister at Hamburgh. Meeting with some difficulty in obtaining a passport to proceed to Paris, he delivered to the minister of the republic a memoir to be forwarded to the Directory.

This agent was authorized to give France assurances of being repaid the full expences of any future armament she might send to Ireland, as well as of the last, which had miscarried; to be raised by the confiscation of the lands of the church, of the property of all those, who should oppose the measures of the party. He was also particularly charged to negotiate, if possible, a loan on the above security to the amount of half a million, or at least three hundred

dred thousand pounds, for the immediate purposes of the Union; and directions were given to him, that in case France could not be prevailed on to advance so large a sum, he should address himself to the court of Spain for that purpose.

It appeared to the committee, that the executive of the Union, though desirous of obtaining assistance in men, arms, and money, yet were averse to a greater force being sent than might enable them to subvert the government, and retain the power of the country in their own hands; but that the French shewed a decided disinclination at all times to send any force to Ireland, except such as from its magnitude might not only give them the hopes of conquering the kingdom, but of retaining it afterwards as a French conquest, and of subjecting it to all the plunder and oppressions, which other countries, subdued or deceived by that nation, had experienced. A remarkable illustration of which sentiment in the Directory of France occurs in the substance of a letter said to have been received from Lewins, the Irish agent at Paris, and shewn by Lord Edward Fitzgerald to John Cormick, a colonel in the rebel army, who fled from justice on the breaking out of the rebellion, and whose voluntary confession upon his apprehension in Guernsey before Sir Hugh Dalrymple, is to be seen in the papers annexed to that report. This letter, although written apparently on money business, which is the cloak generally made use of by the party to conceal their real views, was perfectly intelligible when connected with and explained by the memoir presented by Dr. Mc'Nevin,* the Irish agent to the French Directory. The letter states, that

* It is a most remarkable circumstance, that the memoir to the French Directory, with which Dr. Mc'Nevin was charged, should have fallen into the hands of government: it is a proof either of their vigilance or of the perfidy of the Irish traitors, or of their French allies. Mess. O'Connor, Emmett, and Mc'Nevin tell us in the memoir (p. 21) (they were in fact petrified at their first examination to see it lie on the table before them), that government *had some how or other obtained* their original memoir, to which they therefore refer; and the account, which the secret committee has given us of that memoir is as follows. The next communication of consequence was in June, 1797, when an accredited person went from hence to communicate with the French Directory by their desire: he went by Hamburgh, where he saw the French minister, who made some difficulty about granting a passport, and demanded a memorial, which was written by the accredited person, and given to the French minister under the impression that the passport was not to be granted.

The memoir was written in English, and contained the objects of his mission according to the instructions which he had received from the executive. It began by stating, that the appearance of

that the trustees, that is, the Directory, would not advance the five thousand pounds, that is, the smaller number of troops asked for in M'Nevin's memoir, saying,

of the French in Bantry Bay had encouraged the least confident of the Irish, in the hope of throwing off the yoke of England with the assistance of France : that the event of that expedition had proved the facility of invading Ireland : that in the event of a second expedition, if the object were to take Cork, Oyster Haven would be the best place of debarkation ; that the person who had been before accredited was instructed to point out Oyster Haven as the best place of debarkation ; and it stated the precautions which had been taken by throwing up works at Bantry, Fermoy, and Mallow. It further stated, that the system of United Irishmen had made a rapid progress in the county of Cork, and that Bandon was become a second Belfast ; that the system had made great progress in other counties, and that the people were now well inclined to assist the French ; that 150,000 United Irishmen were organized and enrolled in Ulster, a great part of them regimented, and one third ready to march out of the province. It detailed the number of the king's forces in Ulster, and their stations ; recommended Loughswilly as a place of debarkation in the north, and stated, that the people in the peninsula of Donegal would join the French. It stated also the strength of the garrison in Londonderry, and that one regiment which made a part of it was supposed to be disaffected. It mentioned Killybegs also as a good place of debarkation, and stated that the counties of Tyrone, Fermanagh, and Monaghan, were amongst the best affected to the cause. In case of a landing at Killybegs, it recommended a diversion in Sligo, and stated, that a force of 10,000 United Irishmen might be collected to fall upon Enneiskillen, which commanded the pass of Lough Erne : that it was easy to enter the bay of Galway, but very difficult to get out of it : that the counties of Lough, Armagh, Westmeath, Kildare, King's County, and city of Dublin, were the best organized : that the Catholic priests had ceased to be alarmed at the calumnies which had been propagated of French irreligion, and were well affected to the cause : that some of them had rendered great service in propagating with discreet zeal the system of the union. It declared, that the people of Ireland had a lively sense of gratitude to France for the part which she took, and also to Spain for the interests she took in the affairs of Ireland. It engaged, on the part of the National Directory, to reimburse the expences of France in the expedition which had failed, and of another to be undertaken. The number of troops demanded was a force not exceeding 10,000, and not less than 5000 men. It stated, that a brigade of English artillery had been already sent over, and that a large body of troops would probably be sent if Ireland were attacked. A considerable quantity of artillery and ammunition, with a large staff, and a body of engineers, and as many Irish officers as possible, whose fidelity they were assured of, were demanded as necessary to accompany the expedition. A recommendation was given to separate the Irish seamen who were prisoners of war from the British, supposing they would be ready to join in an expedition to liberate their country. It further recommended a proclamation to be published by the French general, on his arrival there, that the French came as allies to deliver the country, not to conquer it : it also recommended to the Directory to make the independence of Ireland an indispensable condition of the treaty of peace then depending ; and stated, that a proceeding so authentic could not be disguised or misrepresented, and would very much encourage the people of Ireland.

faying, they would make no payment short of the entire sum of, that is, the larger force, which they always declared their intention of sending, and that this payment could not be made in less than four months from that time.

The demands of the party by their first agent went to a force not exceeding ten thousand nor less than five thousand men, with forty thousand stand of arms, and a proportionate supply of artillery, ammunition, engineers, experienced officers, &c.

A still larger supply of arms was solicited by the second messenger, on account of the growing number of their adherents, and of the disarming of the north, in which province above ten thousand stand of arms and as many pikes had been surrendered to the king's troops.

Attempts were certainly made to procure the assistance of such Irish officers then in foreign service as might be prevailed upon, by receiving high rank, to engage in the service of the Union, and a negotiation was actually set on foot for that purpose; but it has been stated, that from the over caution of the agent who was employed in conducting this transaction, nothing in consequence of it was effected.

A second memoir was presented by this confidential agent upon his arrival at Paris, in which he urged such arguments as he conceived most likely to induce the Directory not to postpone the invasion. He endeavoured to demonstrate, that so favorable a disposition as then existed in the Irish mind

Ireland. It contained also an assurance, that the Irish militia would join the French if they landed in considerable force.

Immediately after this memoir was given in to the French minister, a passport was granted to the writer to go to Paris, where he had several conferences with people in authority, some of them members of the Directory: the object of these conferences was to obtain some assurances of succour from them that their agents had before given. The negotiation for peace was then going on at Lisle. He was told by persons in authority, that he did not think the English cabinet sincere, but that if France could get the terms she had a right to expect, the Directory would make peace.

A second memoir was presented at Paris by the same person soon after his arrival there; its object was to impress on the Directory the necessity of expediting the armament for Ireland by every argument which the writer could use.

After the breaking off of the negotiation, and Lord Malmesbury's return to England, assurances were given, that the French government would send a new expedition to Ireland, and that they would never abandon Ireland till she was separated from Great Britain, and these assurances were afterwards renewed.

was in no future contingency to be expected ; and he artfully represented, that the delusions held out by reform might cease from delay, and thus render more difficult to France and the true republicans of that country their endeavours to separate the two kingdoms, and to establish a republic in Ireland.

Previous to that mission from Ireland, a confidential person was sent over by the French Directory to collect information respecting the state of Ireland. Failing to obtain the necessary passports in London to pass into Ireland, he wrote over to request that one of the party might meet him in London. Lord Edward Fitzgerald was sent over, and did not fail to furnish the French agent with every necessary intelligence.

The Directory gave the Irish agents sent to Paris the strongest assurances of support, and did accordingly, during the summer, make preparations of very extensive nature, both at the Texel and at Brest, for the invasion of Ireland ; and in the autumn, intelligence was received by the executive of the union, that the troops were actually embarked in the Texel, and only waited for a wind.

In consequence of this communication, great exertions were made by the party, and in the beginning of October, when the Dutch fleet was on the point of sailing, the approach of the enemy was announced to the societies as at hand.

The troops had been actually on board, commanded by General Daendels, but were suddenly disembarked. The Dutch fleet, contrary to the opinion of their own admiral, as is believed generally, was, at the instance of the French government, obliged to put to sea, which led to the ever memorable victory of the 11th of October, 1797, gained by Lord Duncan.

The traiterous triumvirate, who have given to the public their own report of the case and examination before the secret committee, have appeared uncommonly anxious, that their negotiations with the enemy should not be misrepresented ; particularly that they should not be supposed to have intended to throw their country under the dominion or power of France. By both their agents say they, (p. 20) rather a small number of men, with a great quantity of arms, ammunition, artillery, and officers, were required ; a small force only was asked for, because the executive, faithful to the principle of Irish independence, wished for what they deemed just sufficient to liberate their country, but incompetent to subdue it. This most determined

resolution, and that of the whole body, being collected as far as its opinion could be taken, always has been in no event to let Ireland come under the dominion of France, but it was offered to pay the expences of the expedition. The number required was 10,000 men at the most, and at the least 5000. The executive inclined to the larger number; but even with the smaller, the general opinion among them was, there could be no doubt of success: as to the quantity of arms, by the first messenger 40,000 stand were specified, but by the second, as much more as could be sent; the difference arose from the disarming that had gone on in the North, and the increasing numbers who were ready to use them. The executive also instructed its agent to negotiate for a loan of money, if it could be had in France; if not, to negotiate with Spain; the sum was half a million. Ireland would infallibly become the seat of war, if they did not previously remove their grievances, the existence of which would naturally invite and prove a powerful auxiliary to the enemy. Such a rupture it was observed, must be in the contemplation of the British cabinet, as several of its most leading members declared, that they considered the existence of the British monarchy incompatible with that of the Republic. Conciliation, then, according to every rule of policy and common sense, should be ultimately adopted; and though it should fall short of the wishes of the people, it was asserted, if once possessed of a reasonable share of liberty they would not be brought to run the chance of a revolution in order to obtain a more perfect system of freedom.

We have seen from the authority of the secret committee, that in the spring and summer of 1797, the mass of the people were not infected with the union in the provinces of Leinster, Munster and Connaught: and that in the north tranquillity was fast returning. It is well known, that the United Irishmen, who existed in the north were chiefly Presbyterians and other Protestants: there were comparatively few Catholics amongst them; and henceforth it is observable, that although the rebellion or traitorous conspiracy, which had then been repeatedly reported and proclaimed to exist was engendered, nurtured, and established in the north, the heaviest consequences of it evidently fell upon other parts of the kingdom. The general coercion,* in
which

* In some places the sheriffs refused, in others they complied with the requisitions. An account of these proceedings in Dublin, Cork, and county of Kildare, may be seen in Appendix, No CVI. The like were had almost throughout the kingdom. Of this period Mr. Grattan has given the following

which the kingdom was holden during the spring of 1797, induced several counties, corporations, and districts to apply to the sheriffs and other legal officers to convene meetings, in order to prepare addresses to the throne for the removal of his majesty's ministers, from his councils for ever. These efforts of the people at large were no measures of the United Irishmen; at least of such of them, as at that time had any treasonable views in their engagement: for by far the greater part of the United Irishmen at that period had no criminal intent in acceding to the union. The real traitors would have been sorry, that the ministers should have been changed; for they always considered them as promoters of their own views, by creating disaffection and discontent amongst the people: they exerted themselves in forwarding

lowing picture. (Pet. W. C. p. 9.) “ The effect this had on their mind is manifest from a general resolution to bring home the crops of the persons so imprisoned; and the dispersal of the neighbours so assembled, added considerably to that effect, still further encreased when they saw most of those sufferers either triumphantly acquitted, or without prosecution enlarged after having been seized in their town, torn from their families, led as traitors through their counties, and for above a year confined in a goal, and *now carrying about in their own persons, the living evidence of a convicted government and an expired constitution.*

“ To this oppression we submit to his majesty the dispersal or prevention of county meetings, called for the purpose of addressing the king to remove his ministers.

“ The people of Ireland had been greatly misrepresented, they were neither slaves nor rebels; the powers of understanding, or of mental energy, had in some degree passed from the highest to the middle order, who had rescued their liberty from the parliament of Great Britain, and would not be cheated out of it by the parliament of Ireland. They were not to be put down by venality, nor to be divided by religion; nor to be barked out of their freedom by the senseless cry and forked tongue of his ministers.

“ That minister who determines to enslave the people, must renounce his project or wade through their blood. The people accordingly in the spring of 1797, resorted to the constitutional ways of petition, and applied to the different sheriffs to summon their counties, and on refusal by the sheriff, (a dangerous courtly artifice to stop the prayers of the people from reaching the throne) they summoned themselves. What was the consequence? The petitioners were (we beg to represent to his majesty) confounded with rebels, and the enemies of his ministers were represented as the enemies of his person; the petitioners were answered by fresh troops from England and Scotland; in some instances the meetings were dispersed by the army, and in others were deterred by the threat of military force; and thus did his majesty's ministers ratify the justice of the petitions against them, by adding this great and impeachable offence to all their other transgressions; and thus did his majesty's ministers reduce Ireland to the state of a miserable province, *whose ministers had stopped totally and absolutely the utterance of the people in parliament by corruption, in the nation by a convention bill, and in the counties by the army.*”

the resistance of the petitions of the people, and triumphed in their failure and rejection.

The business of the union did not proceed during the remainder of the year 1797, with the same rapidity, that it had from the middle of the year 1796. For* as it appeared to the committee the steps then taken, as mentioned in the proclamation, had an almost immediate effect in repressing the audacity of the rebels and restoring tranquillity. The loyal inhabitants were enabled in many places to return in safety to their houses; murders became less frequent; in many counties, particularly in Kildare and Tipperary, the people, sensible of the madness and wickedness of their conduct, began openly to acknowledge their crimes, surrender their arms, and point out their leaders and seducers; a submission which invariably obtained for them pardon and protection.

In April and the beginning of May, the delusion of the people was so fast and so widely yielding to the measures of government, which, while they treated with severity the obstinate guilty, in all cases held forth mercy to the repentant, that the leaders of the treason both in Dublin and in the provinces began to perceive, that their cause was losing ground.

After various adjournments, during which no business of moment was transacted, on the 3d of July, 1797, the commons were summoned to attend his excellency in the House of Peers, when the royal assent was given to several bills, and his excellency after a long speech† appropriate to the alarming circumstances

* 17 Jour. Com. Appendix DCCCXXXIII.

† The following was his Excellency's speech.

“ MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

“ I HAVE the satisfaction of being at length enabled to relieve you from your
“ laborious attendance in parliament, and am commanded by his majesty to express the just sense
“ he entertains of that firm temper and vigorous determination, which you have uniformly manifested in supporting his majesty's government and protecting our happy constitution from the attempts of every foreign and domestic enemy.

“ I have much pleasure in announcing to you, that the British parliament has passed acts for
“ abolishing the bounty on sail cloth exported to Ireland, and for prohibiting the importations of
“ cambric from all countries except this kingdom.

“ GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS,

“ I am to thank you in his majesty's name for your unanimity in voting the extraordinary supplies which the public exigencies demanded. However unprecedented those supplies
“ plies

cumstances of the country, prorogued the parliament to the 10th of August ; which was afterwards dissolved by proclamation on the 11th of July, 1797.

On

“ plies have been in extent, and however difficult they may have been rendered from the state of
 “ public credit, you have wisely attended to the superior consideration of national safety. Such
 “ an exertion is the surest proof that you are truly sensible of the invaluable blessings which we are
 “ contending to preserve, and that the best means of effecting an honorable peace, and of restoring
 “ all the comforts of tranquillity, are by displaying at once your determination and your power,
 “ and by convincing your enemies of the extent of your resources as well as of the extent of your
 “ courage.

“ The ready assistance which has been received from the sister kingdom in facilitating the loan
 “ of the year, whilst it is a sure demonstration of her friendly cordiality, cannot fail to shew how
 “ inseparable are the mutual interests of the two kingdoms, and how necessary their connection is
 “ for their mutual prosperity.

“ Your humanity in directing your attention to the present distress among the manufacturers, does
 “ not less command my approbation than your prudence in the mode of conveying relief by increasing
 “ the means of their employment.

“ MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

“ The powers with which you entrusted me by the suspension of the habeas
 “ corpus act, have enabled me to bring to light and to disconcert the formidable and secret conspiracy,
 “ which had been formed for the total overthrow of your establishments, the destruction of
 “ property, and the dissolution of government. This conspiracy has been so fully unfolded by your
 “ wisdom, that it can no longer spread itself under the insidious pretence which it had artfully
 “ assumed, of improving the constitution. In the measures, whether of vigilance or of coercion,
 “ which you have recommended for its extinction, I shall not relax. It will be my study to temper
 “ the necessary acts of severity and rigor, by conciliatory offers of clemency and pardon, to
 “ exhort the infatuated and deluded to abandon their deceivers, and to summon the guilty to repentance,
 “ but at the same time it is and will be my fixed purpose to proceed with vigour against those,
 “ who, regardless of every warning and admonition, shall continue their desperate efforts to
 “ involve this flourishing country in all the horrors of insurrection and invasion, of bloodshed and
 “ of anarchy.

“ I have already the satisfaction to acquaint you, that great numbers who had been unfortunately
 “ seduced have returned to a sense of duty and been admitted to his majesty's clemency, and I
 “ trust that by perseverance and energy every vestige of disaffection will be effaced, and universally
 “ give way to the return of that spirit of loyalty, which has so long been the distinguishing
 “ characteristic of this kingdom.

“ I cannot omit to congratulate with you on the unimpaired lustre of that spirit, which so conspicuously
 “ shone forth when the enemy's fleet appeared on our coasts, nor can I too often repeat my
 “ full sense of your wisdom in the establishment of district corps. I have the most satisfactory accounts
 “ of their improvements in discipline as well as of their exertions in quelling and preventing
 “ insurrection, and I have myself witnessed the unexampled exertions, good conduct, and military

On the 22d of June, 1797, a proclamation had been issued, for extending the time for the United Irishmen to come in and take the oaths of allegiance to the 24th of July. The result of the summer circuits was unsatisfactory both to government and to the people. An unusual number of offenders at all the assizes were found guilty: but in the northern counties, where many had been confined for the greater part of the year upon the charge of being

“ litary appearance of the corps of the metropolis, whose unceasing and unwearied vigilance at a
 “ most important crisis, checked every attempt to produce confusion by riot and tumult, at the
 “ same time that it destroyed the hopes of our enemies, and restored confidence to the country in
 “ general.

“ Your judicious augmentation of pay to his majesty’s regular and militia forces, which must
 “ render their situation so highly comfortable, is at once a seasonable and honorable acknowledg-
 “ ment of their steadiness and loyalty.

“ The traitorous efforts which have been made to entice them from their allegiance have had a
 “ fatal effect in a few lamentable examples. I trust, however, they have excited in the minds of
 “ others so timely a repentance, and in the rest such indignation and abhorrence, that in future no
 “ danger can be apprehended.

“ Your wise institution of a sinking fund, in the midst of financial difficulties, cannot be too
 “ much applauded, and will prevent any ruinous depreciation of funded stock, and being establish-
 “ ed before the national debt has accumulated to any oppressive magnitude, will tend to prevent
 “ its becoming dangerous. A measure so truly calculated for preserving the resources of the state
 “ and supporting public credit, must secure to you the gratitude of an enlightened people.

“ His majesty is exerting every proper effort to produce a speedy and secure peace. It will be
 “ our duty to assist those efforts by convincing our enemies, from the state of our preparation and
 “ the unanimity of our spirit, that they can hope for no advantage by prolonging the calamities of
 “ war.

“ Wherever your abilities, your influence and exertions, can be most advantageously employed
 “ on your return to your several counties, I am confident they will be most conspicuously display-
 “ ed. A constant intercourse with your immediate neighbourhoods must give you an opportunity
 “ of affording to the people both assistance and example, of reclaiming thereby the deluded and
 “ ill-disposed, and confirming the well affected in their fidelity and allegiance. A forward spirit
 “ of loyalty, which in most parts of the kingdom has successfully checked the progress of treason,
 “ will be strengthened and diffused by your presence and exertions. It will be my ambition to
 “ second your activity and zeal, and to co-operate with your efforts for restoring the tranquillity
 “ and prosperity of the kingdom.

“ We have a common and sacred cause to defend, the independence and constitution of Great
 “ Britain and Ireland, from which both kingdoms have derived innumerable blessings under his
 “ majesty’s auspicious reign. They were purchased by the dearest blood of your ancestors in a
 “ crisis not less formidable than the present; I trust we shall not fail to imitate their great example,
 “ and that we shall be enabled by similar courage and continued firmness to transmit to posterity
 “ inviolable, that invaluable inheritance which their valor rescued and their perseverance preserved.

United

United Irishmen, they were mostly acquitted when brought to trial. Such was the case at Antrim. For after several of them had been put on their trial and acquitted, Mr. Marcus Beresford produced a warrant filled with the names of all the prisoners and several other obnoxious persons charged with high treason, by virtue of which the commission of gaol delivery was superseded, and those unfortunate wretches, who with a fond hope had looked up to their day of trial as that of their delivery, were remanded back to prison without any trial, and thence removed to a military prison in Belfast. The illegality of such detention in military confinement was declared by the King's Bench in the next Michaelmas term.*

Wherever

* In B. R. 20th Nov. 1797. Proceedings in the case of Thomas Hufon, and eleven other prisoners who had been brought up by *Habeas Corpus* from the Artillery Barracks at Belfast, to have the legality of their detention by General Lake and Colonel Barber examined by the court.

The return of the writ of *Habeas* was made by Gen. Lake, who had the prisoner, Tho. Hufon, in custody, and was in substance, "that he held the body of the prisoner by virtue of a warrant under the hand and seal of his excellency the lord lieutenant, directed to him (General Lake) to Colonel Barber and all other his majesty's officers, civil and military." A copy of which warrant was annexed to the writ.

The copy of the warrant was read, which was directed as above, and stated that, "whereas information had been received by his excellency, that Thomas Hufon had been concerned in treasonable practices, that warrant therefore was to authorize the said, &c. to arrest him the said Tho. Hufon, wherever he might be found, and to hold him in safe custody until discharged by due course of law, &c. (signed) Camden."

Mr. Emmet, as counsel for the prisoners, submitted to the court, it was his duty to move, that the prisoners at the bar be discharged: and if the court should think, on the arguments which he should offer, that they ought not to discharge the prisoners, he would then move, that they be admitted to bail. He concluded by suggesting to the court that they should remand the prisoners, and leave it to Gen. Lake to confer with the law officers of the crown, and move by them that the custody of the prisoners should be changed.

The court said, that if he meant the court should commit the prisoners, they were not sure that they must not admit them to bail.

Mr. Emmet moved the court to commit them conditionally to the Marshalsea, until the point should be determined, or that at least their agent should be permitted to see them, as, if he were rightly instructed, they had to complain of the most astonishing and horrible treatment.

The attorney general said he knew not how they were treated.

Solicitor general said, the keeping these men had been committed to the first magistrate of the state,—that he alone was responsible for their safety, and that the court could not therefore interfere in their custody, in any manner;—they could not even be brought up to trial without an order from the privy council.

It

Wherever the strong measures of government are pushed to a vigor beyond the law, it becomes essential, that the necessity of such overstretched rigor should not only exist, but that it should be known and felt by the people, on whom that superlegal severity may fall. Much mischief was produced in Ireland by the people's not being convinced of the necessity of subjecting the law to the sword, and their discontents increased with every instance, in which the law counteracted the efforts of the government to harass and oppress them: for in that light did they consider the confinement under warrants for high treason of those United Irishmen, who had been tried and acquitted under the charge of treasonable practices; it was a detrimental triumph, which increased their confidence in the cause of union and their contempt and

It was at length agreed between the parties, and the court ordered accordingly, that the prisoners should be kept in Newgate until the argument on the case should be determined. When the prisoners were brought up to await the opinion of the court, the judges delivered their opinions *seriatim*. They were unanimous: 1st, That it was not necessary nor right the original warrant should be returned, but that a copy of it was sufficient: 2d, That the warrant ought to be sealed, but that enough appeared on the face of the return to induce them to believe it was sealed: 3d, That the offence stated in the warrant as the cause of detention, viz. being concerned in treasonable practices, was sufficiently precise to justify a committal under the act, or holding to bail at common law: 4th, That though it be necessary, that at common law there should be an information on oath to justify a committal, yet under this act which justifies committal even on suspicion, it did not seem necessary there should be information on oath, and even at common law where information on oath is required, it was not necessary that the warrant should state that the information was on oath: 5th, That the objection made for the prisoners on the confinement being in a place not a legal prison, and the warrant under which they had been committed, not being to a known officer of the law, but to a military man, was fatal, that in some cases a private person may legally hold a man in confinement, but it must be only for a reasonable time, until his examination be completed or until (as in the case of Kendal and Rowe) he be transmitted to the proper prison; but such confinement by a private person or in a place not a prison, cannot legally exceed the space of three days. In the present case there was no colour for supposing, that the prisoners were detained only for further examination, or until they should be transmitted to a known prison, for the warrant expressly charged the persons to whom it was directed, to detain them until discharged by due course of law, that the prisoners therefore not being in a legal prison, did not fall within the act for suspending the *Habeas Corpus* act, it being necessary, in order to bring them within the operation of that act, that they should be in prison, and committed by a warrant from his excellency, &c. for high treason, suspicion of treason, or treasonable practices,—and finally, that not being within that act, and nothing appearing against them but the charge of treasonable practices, which at common law was bailable, the court was bounden to admit them to bail.

Each of the prisoners was then bailed to appear at the next assize for the County of Antrim, and discharged.

disaffection

disaffection for government, to see Huson and his united associates liberated on bail by the court of law out of the military power of the government. Individual oppression from the great found also redress at law in some few instances,* and the multitude greedily connected the particular grievance with the

* It has been often said, that history in general is no other, than the melancholy record of human crimes and calamities. That is in part true; as virtue and felicity are so much more rare to be met with through life, than vice and wretchedness. Yet if the recording of bad actions take the right bearing, posterity may receive as useful a lesson from the rehearsal, as from the most high flown panegyrics of extraordinary deeds of heroism. Horror and disgust of certain vices often operate more powerfully upon individuals, than the love and admiration of the opposite virtues. In modern history every detail of an action, that is not meritorious becomes in some degree invidious. History is written for nations not for individuals: and national justice supercedes private feelings. This work is intended, as its title announces, to be an Historical View of the State of Ireland: it never was designed to be a Newgate Calendar of misdemeanours and crimes, to work upon the fickle, various, momentary, and not always well directed passions of the readers. My view is to shew as far as authority will bear me out, what have been the efficient causes of national effects. If a general assertion be hazarded, it may be necessary to allege a particular instance to confirm or illustrate the statement. The following case is stated, to prove how in various ways the lower mind became estranged from and worked up to resentment and revenge against the government. Such a precedent must from the natural workings of human nature (and much as it may have been the fashion to brutalize the Irish peasantry, they are peculiarly sympathetic and sensitive to their own concerns) have advanced the cause of the union more in one week, than the most active emissaries from their arch-rebel leaders could have done in six months.

A very remarkable action for false imprisonment was tried at the assizes of Roscommon, before the Hon. Justice Finucane and a very respectable Jury, wherein Alexander Colvil was plaintiff, and the Right Hon. Charles Lord Viscount Dillon, defendant.

“ The case stated was, that the plaintiff was on Sunday the 12th of January, arrested on a pretended charge of felony by two constables, who bound the plaintiff with hempen ropes, and brought him a prisoner to Loughlin, before his lordship. That his lordship told plaintiff, there were informations sworn against him for sheep stealing, and his lordship further told plaintiff, that he had an order from government to transport any person of bad character to Botany Bay, and that he would send plaintiff there the next day; that his lordship then gave verbal orders to said constables to take plaintiff to the *black hole*: as they were conducting plaintiff to the *black hole*, they were met by a serjeant of Capt. Dillon’s company, who offered plaintiff a shilling to enlist him in said company;—that plaintiff having refused to enlist, or accept of the shilling, was then very severely bound with ropes and put into the *black hole*; that the *black hole* is a dark, damp, arched vault, situate under old ruins in the demesne of his lordship, to which there was neither light or air admitted, but through a small spike hole cut through a single stone: that the *black hole* is not a public prison or bridewell, but used as a place of confinement by Lord Dillon only. That the person called Captain Dillon is the supposed natural son of his lordship, and that his lordship procured for him some commission in

the general system of government. Every such instance greatly tended to promote the union.

From the before mentioned causes it is evident, that towards the close of the year 1797, the union rather abated, than increased. One unequivocal symptom of it's decline was the renovation of dissention between the Dissenters and the Catholics in the north. Sir Richard Musgrave* from an anonymous acquaintance, reports, that most of the Presbyterians separated from the papists in the year 1797; some from "principle, some because they doubted the sincerity of persons in that order: and others foreseeing, that the plot must fail and end in their destruction, took advantage of the proclamation

the army on the terms of his raising men, to effect which, his lordship used such means as his rank and power in the country enabled him to put in execution. That on the 13th of January, plaintiff was brought from the *black hole* into Lord Dillon's presence, and after several efforts to intimidate plaintiff by charges of felony, his lordship declared there was evidence sufficient to hang the plaintiff; and then ordered him to be brought to Captain Dillon's barracks, where he was kept about two hours, then hand-cuffed, and again put into the *black hole*. From Sunday the 12th of January to Saturday the 1st of February plaintiff was kept a prisoner without any lawful authority, and for the most part confined in the *black hole*, but sometimes in the barracks—that he was bounden with ropes, and otherwise treated with great cruelty, particularly, that he was for twenty-five hours of his said confinement in the black hole, hand-cuffed to one Henry Darr, who among several others, was sent there by the said Lord Dillon.

"That plaintiff, by his confinement in the *black hole*, found himself grown very weak, and his health otherwise much impaired; that during plaintiff's said confinement several efforts by threats and promises were made by Captain Dillon, his serjeant, and some of his recruiting party, and by Lord Dillon personally, to induce the plaintiff to enlist, which he obstinately refused; that Mr. Charles Costello, who is the plaintiff's landlord, hearing of his confinement, sent his agent to Lord Dillon, to know for what offence plaintiff was confined, but if there were informations sworn against him for felony, that he might be sent to the county goal; upon which application, and no information of any kind appearing against the plaintiff, he was set at liberty. In some time after, at the plaintiff's instance, Mr. Costello personally applied to his lordship, and requested he might make some compensation to plaintiff for his illegal confinement and great sufferings, which his lordship declined, and said, "*What signifies a fellow of that kind, or what can he do?*" This case was stated by Counsellor Boyd, with much energy and force of argument, and fully proved to the astonishment of the learned judge, and of the jury, who after a very eloquent and impressive speech to evidence from Counsellor Webber, gave a verdict of sixty pounds with full costs to the plaintiff, who is a poor industrious mechanic, with a wife and several children, totally dependant on his industry for support.

"This case is literally copied from the brief, and such were the proceedings.

"E. COSTELLO."

* Memoir. pag. 194.

“ of the 17th of May, and renounced their associates. Numbers withdrew
 “ because they doubted of success without foreign assistance. The Presby-
 “ terians of the counties of Down and Antrim, where they are very numerous,
 “ and where they are warmly attached to the union from pure republican
 “ principles, thought they could succeed without the Papists.” Certain it is,
 that the northern unionists generally held back from this time: the Pro-
 testants of Ulster were originally Scotch, and still retain much of that guarded
 policy, which so peculiarly characterizes the inhabitants of North Britain.
 Some barbarous murders in different parts of the kingdom were committed:
 but they do not appear to have been perpetrated by members of the union or
 persons in any manner connected with them. By the report of the secret
 committee, it appears, that from the summer of 1797 the disaffected en-
 tertained no serious intention of hazarding an effort independent of foreign
 assistance, until the middle of March. Their policy was to risk nothing so
 long as their party was gaining strength. Whatever were the immediate
 cause of the union’s falling off, we find that from the autumn of 1797 the
 Roman Catholics first in the north and afterwards successively throughout the
 kingdom published *addresses and resolutions expressive of their horror of
 the principles of the United Irishmen, and pledging themselves to be loyal
 and zealous in the defence and support of the king and constitution. The
 northern addresses admitted the fact, and lamented that many of the Catholic
 body had been seduced into the union, and they deprecated the attempts
 which were made to create dissention amongst persons of different religions.
 This example was followed by the generality of the Dissenters. If addresses
 were tests of loyalty, his majesty had not more loyal subjects throughout the
 whole extent of the British Empire, than the Irish in the beginning of 1798.
 Scarcely a parish throughout the kingdom, scarcely a dissenting meetinghouse,
 from which an address of loyalty was not issued signed by the priest or mi-
 nister of the flock.

So critically alarming for some time had the situation of Ireland appeared
 to that true and undaunted patriot, the Earl of Moira, that on the 22d of
 November, 1797, he renewed his application to the British House of Lords,
 hoping to interest them in favor of the Irish people, and induce them to re-
 commend measures of lenity and conciliation. He opened a very interesting,

* Some of these are to be seen in Appendix, No. CVII.

instructive, and eloquent speech, by taking a general view of the situation of the British empire, and lamented that the prospective view of his country, which he had given in the last session, had been more than realized. By the lord mayor of Dublin's application for relief, it appeared, that above 37,000 manufacturers in that city alone were reduced to the extremity of distress: and in the towns of Newry and Belfast, where the customs had usually produced 15,000*l.* per annum, not one-fifteenth of that sum had in the last year been received. His lordship then continued:—"When I troubled your lordships with my observations upon the state of Ireland last year, I spoke upon documents certain and incontestible. I address you, upon this day, my lords, upon documents equally sure and stable. Before God and my country, I speak of what I have seen myself. But in what I shall think it necessary to say upon this subject, I feel that I must take grounds of a restrictive nature. It is not my intention to select any individual, in order to adduce a charge against him. It is not my wish to point a prejudice against any one. What I have to speak of, are not solitary and isolated measures, not partial abuses, but what is adopted as the system of government. I do not talk of a casual system, but of one deliberately determined upon, and regularly persevered in. When we hear of a military government, we must expect excesses, which are not all, I acknowledge, attributable to the government; but these I lay out of my consideration. I will speak only of the excesses that belong to, and proceed from, the system pursued by the administration of Ireland. I am aware it may be urged that a state-ment, such as I am about to lay before your lordships, is calculated to interfere too much with the internal government of the sister kingdom. In answer to this assertion, I would, if necessary, begin by laying it down as an incontrovertible opinion, that we have so direct a concern and connexion

* The testimony, which the noble earl here gave of the personal feelings and sentiments of the lord lieutenant, are confirmed by the general report and belief, that his excellency had for some time been disgusted with the imperious, overbearing, and relentless ferocity of the majority of the Irish cabinet: that having in vain attempted to assuage their rage for severity, he had so secretly negotiated his recal, that the actual appointment of his successor was the first suspicion those gentlemen had of a change. The British minister, though late, found the necessity of a firmer governor, who should neither be seduced nor intimidated into the sanguinary system of provocation, which had brought the country to that dire calamity, under which it then laboured. 4 Parl. Reg. p. 238.

" with

“ with Ireland, that any error of government in that country, is a fit subject
 “ for our attention ; and if circumstances required it, for an address to his
 “ majesty for the removal of the chief governor. My lords, this observation
 “ applies not in any manner to the present lord lieutenant ; on the contrary,
 “ I will pay him the tribute which I think due to him, that to much private
 “ worth and honor, his lordship adds, I believe, very sincere wishes for the
 “ happiness of the kingdom, which has been placed under his government.
 “ My lords, I have seen in Ireland the most absurd, as well as the most dis-
 “ gusting, tyranny that any nation ever groaned under. I have been myself
 “ a witness of it in many instances ; I have seen it practised and unchecked ;
 “ and the effects that have resulted from it have been such, as I have stated
 “ to your lordships. I have said, that if such a tyranny be persevered in ;
 “ the consequence must inevitably be, the deepest and most universal discon-
 “ tent, and even hatred, to the English name. I have seen in that country a
 “ marked distinction made between the English and Irish. I have seen troops
 “ that have been sent full of this prejudice, that every inhabitant in that king-
 “ dom is a rebel to the British government. I have seen the most wanton
 “ insults practised upon men of all ranks and conditions. I have seen the
 “ most grievous oppressions exercised, in consequence of a presumption, that
 “ the person who was the unfortunate object of such oppression, was in hosti-
 “ lity to the government ; and yet that has been done in a part of the coun-
 “ try as quiet and as free from disturbance as the city of London. Who
 “ states these things, my lords, should, I know, be prepared with proofs. I
 “ am prepared with them. Many of the circumstances I know of my own
 “ knowledge ; others I have received from such channels, as will not per-
 “ mit me to hesitate one moment in giving credit to them.

“ His lordship then observed, that from education and early habits, the
 “ *Curfew* was ever considered by Britons as a badge of slavery and oppres-
 “ sion. It then was practised in Ireland with brutal rigor. He had known
 “ an instance, where a master of a house had in vain pleaded to be allowed the
 “ use of a candle to enable the mother to administer relief to her daughter
 “ struggling in convulsive fits. In former times, it had been the custom for
 “ Englishmen to hold the infamous proceedings of the inquisition in detesta-
 “ tion : one of the greatest horrors, with which it was attended, was, that
 “ the person, ignorant of the crime laid to his charge, or of his accuser, was
 “ torn from his family, immured in a prison, and in the most cruel uncer-
 “ tainty

“ tainty as to the period of his confinement, or the fate which awaited him.
 “ To this injustice, abhorred by Protestants in the practice of the inquisition,
 “ were the people of Ireland exposed. All confidence---all security were
 “ taken away. In alluding to the inquisition, he had omitted to mention one
 “ of its characteristic features : if the supposed culprit refused to acknowledge
 “ the crime, with which he was charged, he was put to the rack, to extort
 “ confession of whatever crime was alleged against him by the pressure of
 “ torture. The same proceedings had been introduced in Ireland. When
 “ a man was taken up on suspicion, he was put to the torture; nay, if he
 “ were merely accused of concealing the guilt of another. The rack, indeed,
 “ was not at hand; but the punishment of picqueting was in practice, which
 “ had been for some years abolished, as too inhuman, even in the dragoon
 “ service. He had known a man, in order to extort confession of a supposed
 “ crime, or of that of some of his neighbours, picqueted till he actually
 “ fainted; picqueted a second time till he fainted again; and as soon as he
 “ came to himself, picqueted a third time till he once more fainted; and all
 “ upon mere suspicion! Nor was this the only species of torture: men
 “ had been taken and hung up till they were half dead, and then threatened
 “ with a repetition of the cruel treatment, unless they made confession of the
 “ imputed guilt. These were not particular acts of cruelty, exercised by men
 “ abusing the power committed to them, but they formed a part of our sys-
 “ tem. They were notorious, and no person could say, who would be the
 “ next victim of this oppression and cruelty which he saw others endure.
 “ This, however, was not all; their lordships, no doubt, would recollect the
 “ famous proclamation issued by a military commander in Ireland, requiring
 “ the people to give up their arms: it never was denied that this proclama-
 “ tion was illegal, though defended on some supposed necessity; but it was
 “ not surprising, that any reluctance had been shewn to comply with it, by
 “ men who conceived the constitution gave them a right to keep arms in their
 “ houses for their own defence; and they could not but feel indignation in
 “ being called upon to give up their right. In the execution of the order,
 “ the greatest cruelties had been committed: if any one was suspected to
 “ have concealed weapons of defence, his house, his furniture, and all his pro-
 “ perty, was burnt: but this was not all; if it were supposed that any district
 “ had not surrendered all the arms which it contained, a party was sent out
 “ to collect the number at which it was rated; and, in the execution of this
 “ order,

“ order, thirty houses were sometimes burnt down in a single night. Officers
“ took upon themselves to decide discretionally the quantity of arms; and
“ upon their opinions these fatal consequences followed. Many such cases
“ might be enumerated; but, from prudential motives, he wished to draw a
“ veil over more aggravated facts, which he could have stated, and which he
“ was willing to attest before the privy council, or at their lordship’s bar.
“ These facts were well known in Ireland, but they could not be made public
“ through the channel of the newspapers, for fear of that summary mode of
“ punishment which had been practised towards the Northern Star, when a
“ party of troops in open day, (and in a town where the general’s head-
“ quarters were), went and destroyed all the offices and property belonging to
“ that paper. It was thus authenticated accounts were suppressed. His
“ lordship concluded, with entreating the house to take into serious confide-
“ ration their present measures, which, instead of removing discontents, had
“ increased the number of the discontented. The moment of conciliation
“ was not yet passed; but if the system were not changed, he was convinced
“ Ireland would not remain connected with this country five years longer.”

Lord Grenville, in reply, said, that it was a matter of no small difficulty to enter into the question now brought forward, on the vague grounds and isolated facts, upon which it was supported. He expressed his surprise to hear this government accused of hostile dispositions towards the sister country, or eager to keep up in it a system of coercion. He confidently appealed to the house, whether we had ever abandoned measures of concession or conciliation? For the whole space of thirty years, his majesty’s government had been distinguished by the same uniform tenderness of regard, by the same adherence to the principles of a mild system. Amongst the various instances exhibited of liberality and kindness on the part of this country towards Ireland, he adverted to the establishment of its parliament into an independent legislature, and a wide extension of its commercial privileges. It was no arduous task to exonerate government from any charges of inhumanity. Bravery, clemency, and good nature, were the characteristic features of the English disposition. That there might be individual exceptions, he pretended not to say; but, if such excesses were perpetrated, were there no courts of justice, no laws, no magistrates, no tribunals, open to the complaints of the oppressed? Ireland had its juries as well as this country; and the same safeguards were provided for the lives of the Irish as for Englishmen. Indeed, if
a system

a system so rigorous as was described, had been pursued, it must naturally be resented by a spirited and independent people. But what was the object for which these troops were sent over? To protect the great body of the people against conspiracy and assassination; to overawe and counteract the machinations of a set of men, who were actively plotting the destruction of their country, and favoring the designs of our most inveterate enemy. If against such men they had been at times incited to acts of harshness and severity; if they had been occasionally warmed into a sense of indignation, which broke out into insults and outrages, no one, who understood the heart of man, would wonder. What was more natural, than that a large body of Englishmen should be enraged against the abettors of a conspiracy, to deliver up the country to the French invaders? No public man, placed in so critical a situation as Lord Camden, had ever displayed more exemplary moderation in the discharge of a painful duty. If severe measures had been adopted, the circumstances of the country had required it; and if any partial abuses existed, we had only to lament them. Of the press, which was said to be abridged of all its freedom most unjustly, he held now in his hand a paper printed, the contents of which were too shocking to read: its avowed object was to point out innocent men, by name to the poignard of assassins. It loaded his majesty with the most opprobrious epithets, and reviled the English nation with every term of contumely, affirming it to be the duty of every Irishman to wrest from the hands of English ruffians, the property which these English ruffians had wrested from their ancestors. The question was, would their lordships interpose on the present occasion, and tell the parliament of Ireland, and the Irish magistracy, that we were more careful of the interest and happiness of their people than they themselves were; and that the English military were not to obey the Irish laws, but the arbitrary instructions of the British parliament? Earl Moira said, that no sentiment had fallen from him to that effect. He had not reprobated the troops in Ireland for obeying the law, but the conduct of the executive government, which was repugnant to the feelings of the Irish people, inconsistent with the British character, and highly injurious to the real interests of both countries.

The Chancellor warmly supported Lord Grenville, as he said it was his duty to do. He justified all acts of rigor, by the actual existence of an horrid conspiracy in Ireland against all those whose duty it was to preserve order in that country,

country, and by the printed list* of the individual objects of future assassination. The debate was put an end to by a motion for adjournment.

That the public had lost or renounced all confidence in parliament, is evident, from the apathy and coolness, with which the elections went over in the Autumn: they felt no interest in the return of particular members, having been so repeatedly foiled in all their efforts to obtain legislative redress from the rank majorities, which had been lately increased in proportion to the popular exertions to procure the two objects of their wishes, parliamentary reform and Catholic emancipation. True it is, that these two points were made pretexts, catch words, and stalking horses by the traitorous conspirators; but for no other reason, than because they knew them to be the genuine favorite, and not unjust objects of the popular affections and expectations: objects, which flattered their civil and religious propensities and prejudices: objects, which satisfied their reasoning, which interested their feelings, and worked up their passions to enthusiasm: objects, which these perfidious traitors now wished to be opposed with coercion, oppression, and persecution, in order to stimulate the people to discontent and resentment. Mr. Grattan had not a little increased or confirmed this diffidence of the people in the legislature, by declining to accept a seat in the new parliament.† His colleague Lord Henry

* As this proscribed list was never acted upon, and the individuals named in it never found it necessary to resort to any extraordinary caution, or means of self preservation; as secrecy was the baneful principle of the union, and as such a publication would have defeated the horrid project, had it ever been really formed, much credit must be given to Lord Moira's reply to the chancellor on this point. As to the paper to which the noble and learned lord, and the noble secretary had alluded, concerning the names of persons, who were marked out for future assassination, he confessed, he suspected it to be an invention to justify or to support the measures, which had been adopted in Ireland, and of which he had already complained. He suspected this the more, because no printer of a newspaper could have had it from any authentic source, for no man concerned in a conspiracy for assassination, would communicate the intention of himself and colleagues. He wished to speak of assassins as he felt, with the greatest indignation and abhorrence; but he must also add, that he believed that they originated in Ireland from private malice and revenge, and would do so from any party that happened to be predominant, while the present dreadful system continued. It was not by a general system of terror that it was to be prevented.

† Mr. Grattan's speech to a meeting of freemen and freeholders of the city of Dublin, assembled at the Exchange on the 20th of July, 1797, together with Lord Henry Fitzgerald's address, are to be seen in the Appendix, No. CVIII.

Dr. Duigenan almost immediately published a very violent and bitter answer to Mr. Grattan's address to his fellow-citizens of Dublin. Upon its appearance, Mr. Grattan wrote the following note to Dr. Duigenan:

Henry Fitzgerald concurred with him, and accordingly published an address to his constituents, setting forth the reasons, which had induced him to secede from parliament. The diffidence and contempt of the people out of doors for the parliament was much increased by the leaders of the Union, who thus artfully drew their attention to their two favorite objects parliamentary reform and Catholic emancipation, to which parliament had given so decided an opposition.

The new parliament met, according to proclamation, on the 9th of January, 1798: Mr. Foster was re-elected speaker. On the 15th his excellency went to the House of Peers, where he made a speech from the throne.* The Earl

“ Mr. Grattan has been a very gross, a very unprovoked, and a very ludicrous performance
“ written against him, and signed Patrick Duigenan.

“ Mr. G. don't explain his public conduct to individuals.

“ The Statute Book and the Journals of the House of Commons are open.

“ Were he to make his public conduct a subject of explanation, it would not be to such a person
“ as Dr. D.

“ But as the above-mentioned attack mixes in its folly much personal rudeness, Mr. G. judges
“ it not wholly beneath him to take some sort of notice of it; and he is sorry to be forced to
“ observe, that the author has departed from the manners and language of a gentleman, and
“ has thought proper to adopt a strain so false, so vile, and so disgusting, as to render Dr. D.
“ a too . . . and ludicrous to give an affront, or to make an apology.

“ Mr. Grattan remains in Dublin for three days, and is to be heard of at Kearn's Hotel, Kildare-
“ street.”

* The following is his excellency's speech.

“ MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

“ I HAVE his majesty's commands to assemble you in parliament at this important period, and resort to your deliberation and advice.

“ When I reflect on the tranquillity which attended the late general election, I have just ground
“ to believe, that the wisdom and firmness which were manifested by the late parliament were felt
“ and approved by the nation at large, and that your conduct will be actuated by similar principles
“ in defence of our happy constitution.

“ It must have given you great concern to learn, that his majesty's endeavours to restore the
“ blessings of peace have been again frustrated by the desperate ambition of the French government.
“ I have his majesty's commands to lay before you his royal declaration, and the various papers
“ which passed in the course of the late negotiation, in which the magnanimity and moderation of
“ his majesty were so eminently displayed, as to leave no pretext or colour for the insidious conduct
“ and fallacious statements of the enemy.

“ His majesty relies with confidence on the spirit of his people of Ireland, who are sensible of
“ their duty to their God, their sovereign, and their country. He knows they are incapable of
“ being intimidated by any threats, or deluded by any offers; and he implicitly depends on the
“ valour of his regular and militia forces, the active loyalty of the district corps, the courage of the
“ nation,

Earl of Roden moved the address in the lords, which was as usual an echo of the speech. The Earl of Beftive, in a maiden speech, disclaimed every idea of

“ nation, and the prowess of his fleets and armies for defeating every hostile attempt, which may
“ be made on this kingdom.

“ The late signal victory of Admiral Lord Duhcan over the Dutch squadron, atchieved on their
“ own coasts with such professional skill and heroic gallantry, has not only added fresh lustre to
“ the glory of his majesty’s navy, but has given new strength and security to all his majesty’s do-
“ minions.”

“ GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS,

“ I HAVE ordered the public accounts and the estimates for the ensuing year
“ to be laid before you : I lament, that additional burthens are still necessary in order to maintain
“ the honor and security of the empire in the present exigency; and although from the state of
“ preparation in which this kingdom stands some of the demands of former periods will not recur,
“ yet I fear the general expence of the ensuing year will not admit of any considerable reduction.
“ When you reflect on all you have to preserve, and all you have to expect from the enemy you
“ have to combat with, I doubt not the supplies will be cheerfully granted. I shall endeavour on
“ my part that they shall be faithfully applied.”

“ MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

“ IN consequence of the Addresses of the Houses of Lords and Commons in
“ May last, I directed immediate and vigorous measures to be taken for repressing disaffection in
“ the northern parts of the kingdom, and for restoring security and confidence to the loyal and well-
“ disposed; the effect of which has been manifested in the return of subordination and industry in
“ that quarter. Other attempts have since been made by the leaders of the disaffected in some
“ parts of the midland and southern districts with too much success, and emissaries have been em-
“ ployed, and publications have been circulated by them to revive religious animosities, and to open
“ prospects of plunder, by which means the lower classes have been excited to commit acts of the
“ most horrid outrage and barbarity. I have to lament, that the diligence and activity of the ma-
“ gistrates, though assisted by the troops which have been ordered into that part of the kingdom,
“ have not yet been able entirely to put a stop to those disturbances. Constant vigilance, and un-
“ remitting exertions continue to be necessary when all means are tried to excite the people to re-
“ bellion and revolt; when a systematic plan of assassination is adopted and encouraged, and when
“ the most audacious attempts are made to impede and prevent the administration of justice.

“ Amidst your exertions for the defence of the kingdom, I must not omit to recommend to you
“ not to relax your attention to its commerce, its agriculture, and its manufactures, and especially
“ to that of the linen; nor will your liberality be less conspicuous in continuing that protection to
“ the Protestant charter-schools, and the other charitable institutions, under which they have so
“ long flourished.

“ His majesty has commanded me to declare to you, that his firm resolution is taken in the pre-
“ sent arduous contest. He will not be wanting to his people, but with them will stand or fall in
“ the defence of their religion, and in the preservation of the independence, laws, and liberties of
“ his kingdoms.

of vexatious opposition; but he could not agree to that part of the address, which approved of the measures of administration. He reprobated the system of coercion; thought Ireland was only to be reclaimed by timely concession; and strongly recommended Catholic emancipation and temperate reform. The chancellor, in a very animated reply, insisted that these objections were but catch words for revolt and rebellion: What did the noble lord mean, by using the phrase, "imparting to the Roman Catholic body the blessings of the constitution?" There was not a Roman Catholic in Ireland, to whom the benefits of its constitution were not extended as amply as to the noble lord, or any other peer who heard him. The Roman Catholics of Ireland laboured under no disability, to which the Protestants were not equally subject; except the qualification to keep arms, of being a freeholder, or having a certain personal property, can be so construed. The measures of emancipation and reform were far short of the designs of the disaffected: the separation of that country from her imperial connection with Great Britain, and a fraternal alliance with the French republic, were the obvious purposes of the insurgents. The government of Ireland had, by measures necessarily strong, at length quieted that part of the country in which the conspiracy originated. *These measures were, to his knowledge, extorted from the nobleman who governed that country*: they had been successful, and the state of the north at that day was a proof of their wisdom. The county, from which he had lately returned, and which had formerly been a loyal, industrious county, was infested by emissaries from the north, exciting the peasantry to insurrection. Emancipation and reform were not the means which they employed for the seduction of the peasant. The suppression of tithes, the abolition of taxes, and exemption from the payment of rent, were the rewards they promised. Emancipation and reform were only used to delude the better classes.

The question being put on the address, was carried in the affirmative.

The avowal, which Lord Clare made in that speech, was most pointedly illustrative of this delicate and important period of Irish history, and conclu-

"It will be a source of infinite satisfaction to my mind, if, in the execution of my duty, I can contribute to support the generous determination of my sovereign, and maintain the safety and prosperity of his people. I rely upon your advice and co-operation, and, aided by them, I look forward with confidence to a happy issue of the contest in which we are engaged."

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sively demonstrative of the benefit, which Ireland must reap from an incorporate Union with Great Britain, were it only to be relieved from the ferocious severity, with which an Irish government has never failed, when permitted, to oppress and aggrieve their countrymen. His lordship's assertion, that the strong measures of government had then quieted the north, was not generally admitted: but inasmuch as he was the dictator of those very strong measures, which must have been against the judgment, feelings, and sentiments of the chief governor, from whom they were *extorted*, the confession of that noble lord purifies Earl Camden and the British cabinet from the ocean of blood; which was let out after, if not by means of those *very strong measures*.

In the commons also some ineffectual opposition was made to the address, upon similar grounds as in the lords. Mr. Smith moved, by way of amendment to the address, an additional clause, by which the house should recommend to his majesty such measures, as were likely to conciliate the people, and unite them for the safety of the realm against the common enemy. There was indeed nothing like a serious opposition in parliament, since the secession of the Whig party in the last session.

Various causes combined to bring the conspiracy of the unionists to an earlier issue, than was originally intended. Their Gallic friends had long neglected them, and had gone by every opportunity of succouring them with effect. The vigilance and activity of government had encreased: the greatest and most respectable part of the population of the kingdom had in their addresses given fresh pledges of their loyalty, and renounced and reprobated the principles of the union. The leaders therefore of the union, wearied out by the tardiness of their allies, and perceiving their opponents increasing in strength, and their own party visibly on the decline, towards the beginning of the year 1798 resolved upon a desperate effort. In the month of February a military committee was appointed by the executive council of the rebels; detailed instructions were issued to the adjutant-generals; and thanks were voted to the several colonels for their assiduity in embodying and organizing the people. In the mean time, the Irish executive prepared a dispatch for the French directory, pressing, in the most earnest terms, for the promised succours; but it was found impossible to convey it to France. In the months of February and March, many parts of Leinster and Munster were in the actual possession of the United Irishmen, and other parts were secretly under
their

their controul. Nocturnal insurrections were innumerable throughout the kingdom. In one instance, an attack was made in the open day. The town of Cahir, in the county of Tipperary, was invested by a party of 800 men, chiefly cavalry: it was retained in their possession till a regular search was made for arms, and they were suffered to evacuate it in order and without molestation. Acts of murder and barbarity, committed on these occasions, were numerous: and such was the terror generally excited, that the report of the committee of the commons states, that very many of the loyal inhabitants of the counties of Cork, Limerick, Tipperary, Kilkenny, Carlow, King's County, Queen's County, Kildare, and Wicklow, fled for safety to the garriſon towns.

One more humane effort was made by the Earl of Moira, supported by all those, who were at once the friends of order and of liberty, to restore the tranquillity of the kingdom by measures of conciliation: and on the 19th of February, 1798, his lordship submitted a motion to that effect, to the consideration of the Irish House of Lords. In a long and impressive speech he repeated nearly the same facts, which he had stated in his place in the British House of Peers. He related, " that many individuals had been torn from their families, and locked up for months in the closest confinement, without hearing " by whom they were accused, with what crime they were charged, or to " what means they might recur to prove their innocence; that great numbers of houses had been burned, with the whole property of the wretched " owners, upon the loosest supposition of even petty transgressions; that torture, by which he meant picqueting and half hanging, continued to be " used to extort from the sufferer a charge against his neighbours." If he should be contradicted with respect to these facts, he professed himself prepared to " produce the affidavits of them," and declared his intention of moving " for the examination of the deponents at the bar. If there be " delinquencies, there must be delinquents. Prove their guilt, and punish " them; but do not, on a loose charge of partial transgression, impose infliction on the whole community. The state of society was dreadful indeed, " when the safety of every man was at the mercy of a secret informer, when " the cupidity, the malevolence, or the erroneous suspicions of an individual " were sufficient to destroy his neighbour."

His lordship proposed an address to the lord lieutenant, to urge his excellency

lency to pursue such conciliatory measures, as might allay the apprehensions and extinguish the discontents unhappily prevalent in that country.

Lord Glentworth remarked, that the motion appeared to him to be calculated to dishearten and dismay the loyal, and to animate and invigorate the disloyal. The noble earl (he said) in his statement, seemed to mistake the effect for the cause. The measures of which he complained, were the consequences, and not the cause of dissatisfaction; government was certainly to blame, but it was for not having resisted those measures sooner.

The lord chancellor, after paying a just compliment to the character of the noble earl, attributed to his residence out of his own country his ignorance of the actual state of it. He asserted, that the system of government had been a system of conciliation; that in no place had the experiment been so fairly tried as in Ireland; in none had it so completely failed.

In the course of his speech, the chancellor passed some reflections on the Bishop of Down, who had promoted a petition to his majesty in favor of conciliatory measures. From the charge of disaffection, the learned prelate very satisfactorily exculpated himself. He professed, that he was a friend to conciliation: coercion, he said, had been tried long enough. He attributed much of the calamities of the country to the recall of Earl Fitzwilliam. With respect to Catholic emancipation, he considered it as a matter of right, not of favor: and a reform of parliament as an act of policy, which the state of the country rendered absolutely necessary. The motion was also supported by Lord Dunfany, who asserted, that the present system was the cause of the existing discontents. It had been asked of the noble earl who made the motion, why he had not now brought before the house a catalogue of those enormous cruelties, which he had detailed in the British House of Peers? Instead of being asked such a question, the noble and learned lord should rather have thanked him for the conciliating and pacific manner in which he proposed to act. But if noble lords wanted such a catalogue, he could furnish them; he could relate to them not simply the burning of houses, but the murder, in cold blood, of their inhabitants: he could give them an account of three men particularly, who, after having had their houses burned to the ground, were shot by the military, after having been for some time prisoners: and he could add to these accounts, the much more numerous instances of men torn from their family and country, and, without the form of a trial, transported for life.

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The Earl of Moira made a very ample reply, and again offered to substantiate his facts at the bar of the house. He admitted that a conspiracy did exist in the country against the government, but he attributed that conspiracy to the severe and unconstitutional measures, which government had adopted, and to that most impolitic and lamentable measure, the recall of Earl Fitzwilliam. The motion of Earl Moira was negatived by a large majority.

About the beginning of February, 1798, Mr. A. O'Connor was called on his recognizance by the court of King's Bench to take his trial, when it appeared he was gone over to England, as he alleged, on his private concerns; but it afterwards turned out, that the affairs of the Union had carried him thither. The attorney general upon his non-appearance moved the court, that his recognizance, which was in 2000*l.* and that of his bail (Lord E. Fitzgerald and counsellor Emmett), in 1000*l.* each, should be estreated. Notwithstanding a very stiff opposition from the attorney general, the court consented to respite the recognizance till the next term. The parliament continued indeed to sit, and to do business, but so little interest did the public take in the debates, that the galleries were wholly deserted, and scarcely sufficient members attended to make up a house.* The debate this session, which most interested the public was, that in the Lords upon Lord Moira's motion, in which the chancellor spoke for four hours, and the house divided between

* Whilst the commons were debating the taxes on the 12th of February, Mr. Browne (of the College) congratulated the house on the appearance of some diversity of sentiment that night. He said, government must rejoice at it; for the fullen silence and cold indifference, which had so long prevailed, were more alarming than any opposition whatsoever; and he could not help observing, that even on that important occasion, the remarkable thinness of the galleries shewed how little interest the public took in their debates upon any thing. Such were the effects of the triumphant majorities, in which administration once rejoiced. The minister called on gentlemen who found fault with those taxes which he proposed, to state others; several had been proposed; a voluntary contribution had indeed been coldly received by the house and the country, and it was either a very shameful, or a very alarming circumstance, that there was such apathy on that subject: but why had not administration adopted a tax on absentees? He concluded by observing, that though the civil list were now limited, and new pensions could not be granted, yet in the present list great retrenchments might be made: what pretence had great and noble and rich lords to pensions? How many places might be abolished, many of them in his own profession? How many dispositions to convenience particular men avoided? The retrenchments that might be made in the civil establishment would amount to the taxes required. While this was the case, the people would grumble at any tax.

two and three o'clock in the morning, 9 for and 44 against the motion. On the 27th of February, when the House of Commons was in a committee of supply, a very interesting conversation arose out of an over heated philippic of Dr. Duigenan, against the establishment of the Catholic seminary at Maynooth, and the character of Dr. Hufley, the Catholic bishop of Waterford. This prelate had in the preceding year published a pastoral letter to the Catholic clergy of the united diocese of Waterford and Lismore, in which he exhorted them to attend to the spiritual duties of the flock committed to their care. He pointedly reprobated the too frequent usage and indifference of parents educating their children in the charter schools, and the soldiers attending the Protestant service at church. He represented the physical consequence of the Catholic body as much more considerable, than it is usually considered, viz. as nine tenths of the nation at large, and ninety-nine hundredths of his diocese. This he did with a spirit of more independence, and in language more free and energetic, than was relished by the Castle: it gave particular offence to the great advocates and supporters of the system of coercion. It was considered by many of his brethren as too bold and strong for the then distempered state of the public mind, and calculated to give a fresh handle to their enemies to renew and sharpen their asperity against them.* The motion, which Dr. Duigenan opposed with so much virulency, was made by the chancellor of the exchequer, viz. that a sum of 10,000*l.* should be granted to the trustees of the Roman Catholic college at Maynooth, to defray the expences of certain additions to the buildings, and also for the maintenance of the establishment for a year, viz. the professors, with fifty free scholars for half a year ending in September next; and for the professors and two hundred free scholars from the 29th of September next to the

* Few ecclesiastics ever possessed more extensive knowledge, profane and ecclesiastical, than Dr. Hufley. He had long enjoyed the good opinion and peculiar confidence of the British ministry, as well as the favor of several foreign courts, particularly that of Spain. Upon his first entrance into his pastoral function, his great object was to impress his flock with a dignified sense of their religion, and to establish a free, unchecked, and open exercise of it, after the legislature had given it toleration. He frequently officiated to the Catholics in the militia regiments, which were encamped at Lehavenstown: he incurred much displeasure at the castle from having lodged a strong remonstrance against the punishments inflicted upon some Catholic soldiers for having disobeyed orders, by refusing to attend the Protestant service when their regiments were ordered to church. The pastoral letter is to be seen in the Appendix, No. CIX. together with some interesting letters of Mr. Edmund Burke upon this prelate's conduct.

25th of March, 1799. Mr. Pelham, in support of the original motion, replied to the arguments of Dr. Duigenan, and gave a succinct history of the college from its foundation. He asserted, that the members of the college were not open to blame for any imprudence of Dr. Hufley, as they had displaced him for non-residence. With respect to the emoluments of each scholar, he shewed, that they were much inferior to those of the scholars of Trinity College, Dublin, as the 25*l.* given to those at Maynooth, included their maintenance and all other necessities, while at T. C. D. there was a yearly emolument sometimes of 20*l.* a year over their maintenance. As to the number of 200, he said it was not considered as a fixed number of regular scholarships, but as a temporary arrangement for the convenience of those young men, who, by the war with France, had been deprived of their situations in that country. Besides the number of Catholic priests occupied in the care of the ministry in that country were 2000, and to recruit that number continually, 200 were few enough to be educated at one time in college. He then defended the measure of establishing a Catholic seminary for education as at once a measure of justice to the people, and liberal policy of the state. The original motion was carried without a division. Mr. J. C. Beresford opposed it, but upon a very different ground, namely, because the existence of a distinct seminary for Catholic education was calculated to keep the Catholic and Protestant from uniting, and becoming one people. He observed, that it had always been the policy of the British cabinet to divide the people of that country by exciting religious differences, and he began to perceive that system was likely to continue.

Complaints were very justly made of the licentiousness and mischievous malice of the press. Towards the end of February, Mr. O'Donnel called the attention of the house to some publications in the paper called *The Press*. After stating the mischiefs, which he asserted that paper had produced in the country, and urging the necessity there was for putting it down not by military force, but by law, if any law existed that could effect that purpose, and if not, that parliament should enact a law for the purpose, he proceeded to read several passages, upon which he commented, and declared, that if they were suffered to pass unnoticed, it must be supposed the licentiousness of the press was not restrained in that country by any law: he disclaimed having been induced to bring forward this subject by any personal attack, which had been made on himself, or from any personal animosity to the gentleman
who

who professed himself the editor of that paper; on the contrary, he felt for him a sincere friendship, which had commenced in early life: he professed as strong a friendship for the brother of that gentleman (Mr. Roger O'Connor), then a prisoner at Cork, and whose sufferings he would be happy to mitigate, even by sharing with him the miseries of a prison; he brought the business before parliament merely from a conviction, that his duty to that house and to the country called on him so to do. He concluded by moving, "That a committee be appointed to enquire into the nature and tendency of the publication called *The Press*, and to report their opinion to the house."

The United Irishmen, in order to repair the loss they had sustained by the military demolition of the Northern Star Office at Belfast, which has been noticed to have been under the direction of Mr. Neilson, had established this paper called *The Press*: but the intemperate language of this publication subjected it to a prosecution; the publisher was imprisoned, and the paper in danger of being suppressed. In this crisis Mr. A. O'Connor came boldly forward, and announced himself as the proprietor and editor of the obnoxious paper. He had lately been elected member of the Irish Directory, in conjunction with Lord Edward Fitzgerald, Mr. Oliver Bond, a gentleman in a considerable commercial business in Dublin, Mr. M'Nevin, who had been actively concerned for the Catholics during Lord Fitzwilliam's administration, and counsellor Emmet. Strong suspicions however fell upon Mr. O'Connor, and also upon his brother. Mr. Roger O'Connor was apprehended, and lodged in Cork gaol, on a charge of high treason, from which, however, he was liberated at the spring assizes, from a total want of evidence against him. Thus circumstanced, in the beginning of the year 1798, Mr. Arthur O'Connor came to England, with an intention, as it afterwards appeared, of proceeding to France, in conjunction with John Binns, member of the London Corresponding Society, James Coigley, an Irish priest, and a person of the name of Allen. In the latter end of February they went to Margate, intending to hire a small vessel to convey them to France. Some circumstances in their conduct, however, exciting suspicion, they were all apprehended, and first committed prisoners to the tower, and afterwards to Maidstone gaol. At Maidstone they were tried by a special commission on the 21st and 22d of May, and all of them acquitted, except Coigley, on whom had been found a treasonable and most absurd paper, purporting to be an address from "the Secret Committee of England to the Executive Directory of

France." Coigley was condemned and executed; and Mr. O'Connor and Binns, after their acquittal, were detained on another charge of treason preferred against them. In the mean time, and in consequence of the motion of Mr. O'Donnel, an act had passed the Irish parliament, authorizing grand juries to present any news-paper, containing seditious or libellous matter, as a nuisance; and also authorizing the magistrates, on such presentation, to suppress the paper, and seize and destroy the printing materials, &c. The paper called *The Press* was therefore suppressed, and some of its principal supporters taken into custody; but no discovery of importance resulted from this transaction.

In the debate in the commons upon the abuses of the press, Mr. Vandeleur introduced the subject of the Orangemen, stating, that other papers were under as mischievous a control of the Orangemen, as the press was of the United Irishmen. He was astonished, that they should be still countenanced and supported by ministers, though the first law officer of the crown held their excesses, and the conduct of those magistrates who countenanced them, so much in hatred, that he declared, could he have found other men of sufficient loyalty in the county to fill their places, he would have removed every one of them from the magistracy. But if the measure were necessary, he thought it should be left to the government to propose it; it was a delicacy due to them.

Mr. Duigenan could not help expressing his surprise at what had fallen from the honorable gentleman who spoke last, respecting Orangemen. He was not a friend to any separation of the people by marks or names of discrimination, but he could not help saying, that the Orangemen appeared by the declarations published lately in the public papers, particularly in a paper called *The Dublin Journal*, to be very good and loyal subjects; their declarations breathed nothing but loyalty, and a desire to protect all descriptions of persons, that should behave themselves in a neighbourly and peaceable manner, as well Catholics as others; and therefore he wondered the honorable gentleman had taken occasion to introduce their names or insinuate any charge against them in this debate, particularly as whatever excesses might formerly have been committed by them, and which certainly could not be justified, however they might be extenuated by the spirit of loyalty, from which they sprung, were now at an end, and did not ever extend beyond the limits of a single county, and that a small one. The honorable gentleman
must

must know, that the name of Orangemen was made a pretext to sow dissension among the people, and that it was sedulously propagated, that their object was to exterminate the Catholics.

A remarkable instance of that occurred on the 11th of October last, when above 3700 men, all Catholics, assembled in arms at night, between Bray and Arklow, declaring, that they did so, because they were informed the Orangemen were coming to destroy them. In the same way there were risings in the counties of Wicklow and Wexford by the Catholics, under the pretence, that the Orangemen were coming upon them. What effect then must it have thus to introduce the name of Orangemen in this debate, as if they were men, who were declared enemies to the Catholics, when it was the fact, that they were willing to defend the Catholic, as well as any other man, if he behaved himself like a good subject.

Mr. Vandeleur repeated his objections to those publications, which held up Orangemen as the peculiar favorites of administration, and urged the danger that must result from letting any description of persons assume to themselves the tone of rulers, by declaring that they would protect others, &c. He agreed, that the name of Orangemen had been held out by the ill-disposed to create jealousies and dissension, and therefore thought it right, that such a denomination should receive no countenance.

Mr. Tighe said, that as Orangemen as well as Defenders had been mentioned, he would not enquire whether those had burned houses and expelled their inhabitants to save the constitution, or whether these had resisted them for the same reason; but he would say, that if any particular set of men were allowed to proclaim themselves as the protectors of this or that description of people, it would be a most dangerous precedent: if it were permitted to one body of men, every other would claim it.

Mr. Pelham assured the house, that no disturbances then existed between the Orangemen and the Catholics. Letters had been received from large bodies of both descriptions, informing government, that they were at last convinced both parties had been deceived by the United Irishmen, whose leading principles were a desire to see a French army in their country to effect a complete separation of Ireland from the crown of Great Britain. With respect to the Orangemen and Defenders, whom an honorable gentleman had in the inadvertence of debate called rebels, he did not for his part think,
that

that either description of these men deserved that epithet. They were the United Irishmen only, to whom that name applied.

On the 5th of March, 1798, Sir Lawrence Parsons after a very long and interesting speech made his promised motion, that a committee should be appointed to enquire into the state of the country, and to suggest such measures as were likely to conciliate the popular mind. Lord Caulfield in a maiden speech of much ability seconded the motion. Lord Castlereagh, with whom the majority of the house went, vehemently opposed it. He entered into a history of the country for some years back, and concluded from the events, that the United Irishmen were not men, who would be contented or conciliated by any measures of concession short of a separation from England, and fraternity with the French Republic; that they were in open rebellion, and therefore only to be met by force. He reasoned also to prove, that the coercive measures of the government had been the consequences not the causes of the discontents; that the excesses charged on the soldiery were naturally to be expected from the state of things, though he did not cease to lament them; and he also contended, that where excesses had taken place, the laws were open and able to punish them; witness the last assizes of Drogheda.

His Lordship was followed by a long train of members, who spoke against the motion on the ground of its being not likely to be effectual, because the professed designs of the United Irishmen, were such as left no hope they would be conciliated by such measures; because to yield to the measure at that time would be a dishonorable compromise with rebellion; and because conciliatory measures had already been tried by government in the proclamation of offering a free pardon to all who should come in and submit. Some few gentlemen spoke for the question, amongst whom Mr. Plunket particularly stated his reasons for doing so, because much obloquy had been thrown on those who supported it: he felt strongly the awful situation of the country. He felt detestation for the wicked combination, which had brought it into that situation. But that situation imposed on the house an imperious necessity of adopting every fair and honorable measure, which might probably lead to lessen or avert the difficulties which pressed upon the state. There were in that country hundreds of thousands, who, though not in favor with the administration, not being friends to their measures, were not with the United Irishmen, but entertained the strongest disapprobation of them and their plots. The United Irishmen dreaded nothing so much as their concession: they

they trembled at it, because it would tear off the mask, with which they had hitherto covered themselves, and strip them of those pretexts, by which they had crowded their ranks. It was by that mode they were to be put down.

At five o'clock in the morning the house divided upon Sir Lawrence Parsons's motion, when there were only 19 for it and 156 against it.

It is important to remark, that in all the debates in parliament, whenever the abuses and outrages of the army were mentioned they were never contradicted; the gentlemen from the treasury bench replied, that they were to be expected: that they were the natural effusions of a loyal army in a rebel country: that such had existed at all times, particularly in America: and that the courts of law were open to redress, and none should complain, who refused to seek it. These were speculative not practical resources. Cottagers, labourers, and farmers, whose habitations had been destroyed, whose relatives had been transported, maimed, or murdered, found no solace or relief in the power, without the means of prosecuting either civilly or criminally. Every single instance of such outrage and cruelty created disaffection, hatred, and revenge in thousands, who knew and who execrated the deed. The ferocity of the system was engendered, cherished, and nurtured, not by the British but by the Irish administration. Lord Clare avowed those very strong measures were extorted from the chief governor. The British cabinet had most judiciously appointed the gallant Sir Ralph Abercrombie the commander in chief in Ireland, well knowing, that he would require the duties, without debasing the character of the foldier. Very soon after his arrival that respected veteran found himself under the necessity of publishing the following general orders, which not only proved the licentious and disorderly state in which the army then was, but reflected the strongest imputation upon those through whose connivance, neglect, or criminality, they had been permitted or encouraged to run into that lamentable and disgraceful situation.

*Adjutant General's Office,
Dublin, February 26th, 1798.*

“ GENERAL ORDERS.

“ THE very disgraceful frequency of courts martial and the many complaints in the conduct of the troops in this kingdom, having too unfortunately proved the army to be in a state of licentiousness, which must render it formidable to every one but the enemy: the commander in chief thinks it necessary to demand from all generals commanding districts and brigades, as well as commanding officers of regiments, that they exert themselves,

“ selves, and compel, from all officers under their command, the strictest and
 “ most unremitting attention to the discipline, good order, and conduct of their
 “ men; such as may restore the high and distinguished reputation the British
 “ troops have been accustomed to enjoy in every part of the world. It
 “ becomes necessary to recur, and most pointedly to attend to the standing
 “ orders of the kingdom, which at the same time, that they direct military
 “ assistance to be given at the requisition of the civil magistrate, positively
 “ forbid the troops to act (but in case of attack) without his presence and
 “ authority; and the most clear and precise orders are to be given to the
 “ officer commanding the party for this purpose.

“ The utmost prudence and precaution are also to be used in granting
 “ parties to revenue officers, with respect to the person requiring such assistance
 “ and those employed on the duty; whenever a guard is mounted, patrols
 “ must be frequently out to take up any soldier, who may be found out
 “ of his quarters after his hours.

“ A very culpable remissness having also appeared on the part of officers
 “ respecting the necessary inspection of barracks, quarters, messes, &c. as well
 “ as attendance at roll-calls, and other hours: commanding officers must
 “ enforce the attention of those under their command to those points, and
 “ the general regulations: for all which the strictest responsibility will be expected
 “ from them.

“ It is of the utmost importance, that the discipline of the dragoon regiments
 “ should be minutely attended to, for the facilitating of which the
 “ commander in chief has dispensed with the attendance of orderly dragoons
 “ on himself, and desires that they may not be employed by any general or
 “ commanding officers but on military and indispensable business.

“ *Lieut. Gen. Craig,*

G. Hewit, Adjutant General.

“ *Eastern District Barracks, Dublin.*”

The liberal and genuine spirit of the British soldier, so prominent on the face of these orders was repugnant to the coercive system of the Irish ministry: but the inflexible firmness of that gallant veteran repelled every idea of extorting from him measures he did not approve of: he soon after resigned. Until the arrival of Lord Cornwallis, the extorted system of very strong measures, so much boasted of by the Earl of Clare, was revived as extensively as possible. The effect of a principal part of Sir Ralph Abercrombie's orders, was soon defeated by Mr. Pelham's letter of the 3d of March, 1798, in which

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he informs the officers, that his excellency further authorised them to employ force against any persons assembled in arms, not legally authorised so to do, and to disperse all tumultuous assemblies of persons, though they might not be in arms, without waiting for the sanction and assistance of the civil authority, if in their opinion the peace of the realm, and the safety of his majesty's faithful subjects might be endangered by waiting for such authority.

The parliament in the mean while prepared the money and some other pressing bills with little or no opposition, and when they received the royal assent on the 24th of March, the speaker made an impressive speech* on the
unprecedented

* " MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,

" LARGE as the supplies of the last session were beyond all former grants, these
" which the commons now offer to his majesty are not inferior; they go to the fullest extent of
" every service proposed by government, and are given with an unanimity and zeal which mark
" the unalterable determination of this kingdom to stand or fall with Great Britain, and shew that
" our vigor rises as the vaunting menaces of the enemy encrease.

" With the same unanimity we have voted the maintenance of an army far greater than was ever
" kept up by this kingdom during any preceding war; and we have continued to them the aug-
" mentation of pay which was granted by the last parliament, and which your excellency did justly
" state to that parliament to be a seasonable and honorable acknowledgment on their part of the
" steadiness and loyalty of that army; the present parliament feels the same sentiment towards
" them. Repeated experience of the order and alacrity which they have shewn on every occasion
" that has offered, confirms his majesty's faithful commons in those sentiments, and we join most
" cordially with his majesty in his firm reliance on the valor of his regular and militia forces in this
" kingdom, which his majesty has been pleased to express in his gracious answer to our address this
" session.

" While the courage, the vigor, and the discipline of those forces, must render them formidable
" to the enemy and ensure his defeat, should he be desperate enough to attempt invasion, their zeal,
" and that of the yeomen to put down rebellion, to crush insurrection, and to assist the executive
" power in protecting the loyal, the innocent, and well disposed, affords the most convincing proofs
" of their ardent and unshakeable attachment to the best sovereign and best constitution, that ever
" blessed a free and happy people. We are free, and we will not tamely give up our happiness.
" The loyal spirit of the nation is able to crush rebellion to atoms wherever it shall dare to shew
" itself, and with the firmness which so strongly marks your excellency's character, with the con-
" stant success which has attended every vigorous measure that necessity has called on your excel-
" lency to adopt, we have nothing to fear. We have indeed to lament that traitorous conspiracies
" can still continue, and that any men can be found in the land so lost to every sense of patriotism,
" of humanity, of duty to themselves, their country and their God, as to degrade the nation and the
" name of Irishmen, by acts of ingratitude, barbarity, and assassination, which would debase a fa-

unprecedented magnitude of the supplies, with several strong observations on the critical situation of the kingdom at that juncture.

The rebellious leaders of the Union about this time received a letter from France, stating that succours might be expected in April. But they never learned why that promise was not fulfilled. It is indeed admitted on all hands, that the French government had so little confidence in the Irish rebels, that in all their communications with the rebel directory, they never intimated to them the place, where they meant to land, or except in the first the force they would bring. There appears too much reason to believe what Messrs. O'Connor, M'Neven, and Emmett have observed in the memoir,* that the French never will abandon the plan of separating that country from England, so long as the discontents of the people would induce them to support an invasion.

It more frequently falls within the duty, than the power of the faithful

“ vage, acts which call for the heavy hand of justice, and which the ordinary power of the laws has proved inadequate to prevent the melancholy and frequent repetition of.

“ But while we lament such a mortifying calamity, we have the satisfaction of seeing how little its malignant influence or the efforts of an exasperated and revengeful enemy, have affected our commercial prosperity.

“ Notwithstanding the largeness of the supplies, we have continued the usual bounties and encouragements to the trade, the agriculture, and the manufactures of the kingdom, and we see with sincere gratification the desirable effects of those encouragements, in the great increase of trade during the war, in the general confidence, which attends private as well as public credit, in the usual plenty which our agriculture supplies, and in the prosperous state of all our manufactures, but most particularly of our great staple the linen.”

* Memoir 23. There appears no plausible reasoning for doubting the sincerity of the proffered opinion of those Memorialists: at all events *fas est et ab hoste doceri*. “ Let us then (say they) whilst Ireland is yet our country, be indulged in a few remarks, which we deem extremely important to its future prosperity; now that we have given these full and faithful details of the past, we cannot be suspected of any but pure disinterested motives in what we are about to say, ere we leave it for ever. The parts we have acted have enabled us to gain the most intimate knowledge of the dispositions and hearts of our countrymen. From that knowledge we speak, when we declare our deepest conviction, that the penal laws, which have followed in such doleful and rapid succession, the house burnings, arbitrary imprisonments, and free quarters, and above all, the tortures to extort confessions, neither have had, or can have, any other effect but exciting the most lively rancour in the hearts of almost all the people of Ireland, against those of their countrymen who have had recourse to such measures for maintaining their power, and against the connexion with Great Britain, whose men, and whose aid have been poured in to assist them.”

annalist

annalist to trace the true causes of changes both in men and measures. It is notorious, that in Ireland, the active minister, upon whom the odium or merit of the government measures personally fell, was the first secretary of the lord lieutenant. Through his mouth did his excellency speak to the House of Commons: from him did the nation expect the reason, and upon him chiefly rested the responsibility of the government measures in the belief of the public. His sentiments were of course concluded to be in perfect unison with the lord lieutenant, as his voice was the organ of his excellency. To this particular period of time must be referred the resignation of General Sir Ralph Abercrombie and the extorted renovation and extension of the system of coercion and terrorism. It appears then, that Mr. Pelham, however earnest and firm he had been in opposing Catholic emancipation and parliamentary reform, which two questions Earl Camden had avowedly been sent to oppose, was very far from approving the harsh and sanguinary means of dragooning the people into submission, which had been for some time practised and were intended to be persevered in; a system * *extorted from the chief governor*. He resolved therefore to retire from a situation, in which he was under the necessity of giving official countenance and support to a system, which in principle he abhorred, and which he knew to have been extorted

* This system at this time (viz. 5th April, 1798,) Mr. Grattan has thus described. (Pet. W. C. p. 12.) “ Here we perceive and lament the effects of inveteracy, conceived by his majesty’s ministers against the Irish. “ Irritable and quellable, devoted to superstition, deaf to law, and “ hostile to property;” such was the picture, which at different times his ministers in Ireland have “ painted of his people, with a latent view to flatter the English by the degradation of the Irish, “ and by such sycophantship and malice, they have persuaded themselves to consider their fellow “ subjects as a different species of human creature, fair objects of religious proscription and political incapacities, but not of moral relationship, or moral obligation; accordingly they have “ forded indemnity for the rich, and new pains and penalties for the people; they have given “ lous descriptions of his majesty’s subjects, and have easily persuaded themselves to exercise “ lous practices against their lives and properties; they have become as barbarous as their system, and as savage as their own description of their countrymen and their equals; and now it “ seems they have communicated to the British minister, at once their deleterious maxims and “ their foul expressions, and he too indulges and wantons in villainous discourses against the people of Ireland, founding the horrid trumpet of carnage and separation. Thus the language of “ the ministers becomes an encouragement to the army to murder the Irish.

“ We leave these scenes, they are dreadful; a ministry in league with the abettors of the Orange-boys and at war with the people; a people unable to procure a hearing in either country, while “ the loquacity of their enemies besieges the throne.”

from the chief governor, whose immediate and responsible agent he was before the public. The last time he spoke in public was on Sir Lawrence Parsons's motion, which he opposed in a manner, that evidently betrayed the uneasiness of his own situation.* He soon after retired; Lord Castlereagh was appointed to succeed Mr. Pelham, and we find, that on the 23d of

* On that occasion the right honorable secretary spoke as follows. "An insinuation had been let fall, as if some military orders of the commander in chief, Sir Ralph Abercrombie, who was not recalled, (he resigned) bore the complexion of difference with the cabinet; those orders had merely for their object the discipline of the army, than which to perfect there was not an officer existing better qualified, nor one who had made more and better soldiers for the empire. He credited the good intentions of the honorable mover, but did he think that in applying to him measures of coercion, that they embraced the whole nation, God forbid! He had always a confidence in the majority of the Irish people, and he trusted that the dispositions and efforts of the country gentlemen would soon render that majority more decisive in the expression of its sentiments. The honorable baronet had but lightly touched on the two objects of conciliation: was it because an examination would make them less defensible? Adverting to part of Sir Lawrence Parsons's speech, which asserted that the popular acts since 1783, were only given to stave off reform, Mr. Pelham observed, that the granting those was a progressive reform, and therefore the wisest that could be adopted. The honorable baronet dated the discontents of this country from the recall of Earl Fitzwilliam: this was a subject, on which he (Mr. Pelham) felt delicate; the consequence of that recall was his arrival in the country, the state of which at that time could not be supposed to render his situation peculiarly pleasing or inviting, but he did his duty. The war also was stated as a cause of discontent; how then could these be reconciled? or was it to be supposed, that if the war were a cause of discontent, the people of Ireland should feel satisfied with a nobleman, who was uniformly one of the most strenuous supporters of that war? Mr. Pelham then, in justification of the measures of the present administration, entered into a retrospection of the disturbances prevailing in that kingdom since the year 1793, and the laws, to which they gave birth.

"He adverted to the autumn of 1796, when the idea of an invasion prevailed, and when the hopes and daring conduct of the northern insurgents made it necessary to issue the orders, under which General Lake acted: he read the proclamation of that officer, which had been so much and so often the subject of misrepresentation, proving from its language, the dispositions, which directed it to have been the protection of his majesty's peaceable and well disposed subjects, and it must be allowed that a measure so strong was never carried into execution with so much tenderness to those, against whom it applied. He disclaimed any wish on the part of government to irritate the public mind, or any portion of it; on the contrary, every member of that government deeply regretted that any such feelings should obtain for a moment; but they were determined to oppose rebellion by every means which they were empowered to use, and which the public welfare demanded.

April,

April, 1798,* his lordship acquainted the House of Commons, that his excellency had ordered a message to be delivered to the house, that his majesty had under the alarming circumstances of the nation, ordered over two regiments of foreigners, in order to encrease the regular force of that kingdom. And on the same day Mr. Vandeleur made a motion that Lord Castlereagh having since his election for Down, accepted the office of chief secretary to his excellency the lord lieutenant, his seat in that house was thereby vacated.† It was strongly insisted upon by Mr. Vandeleur, and the few gentlemen who supported him, that from the usage of parliament since the passing of the place bill, from reason, analogy, and the words and spirit of that act, the place of the secretary came within the purview of it: it was resisted by the majority of the house, and of course the question was lost.

It has ever been the fatal bane of Ireland to be torn by some internal dissention or disunion. Scarcely had the foul spirit of discord began to be extinguished in the kingdom at large, (that singular epoch dates its origin from the administration of the Marquis of Buckingham) than it enkindled a fresh and more scorching flame in some particular districts. Armagh for some years kept up the execrable spirit: from thence it extended, and it is to be feared, will be found still to infect the society of Orangemen in its present enlarged establishment. Those who composed that society for some years had

* 17 Com. Jour. p. 314.

† In a debate of the commons on the 24th of April, it was objected to Mr. Vandeleur, that the question had been set to rest by the vote of that house negating the motion for Lord Castlereagh's seat having been vacated by the acceptance of office, on the 6th of the month, which was Good Friday, (17 Com. Jour. p. 313.) He acquitted himself of having been absent from the house through negligence of his duty on the day on which this resolution, everive of the law of the land passed. It was a day set apart in every Christian state for a solemn observance of religious duties; and he challenged the right honorable member to say, whether on the journals of parliament there was to be found a single instance of public business having been done by the house on Good Friday. Had he believed it possible, that on such a day the house would have proceeded to decide a question of such importance without any notice having been given to gentlemen of that intention, he should, ill as he was on that day, have attended in his place, and given his warmest opposition to the resolution. With respect to the measure itself, the right honorable gentleman had conceded that it was contrary to the spirit of the act, and he justified it only by entering into a subtle distinction between the "crown" and the "executive power:" but he was convinced, that every man of plain and sound understanding would see that the legislature when they passed this act, meant by the word "crown," the executive power of the state, and that their object was to preserve the independence of parliament from the growing influence of that branch of the government.

signalized.

signalized themselves by a ferocious system of severity and revenge against their opponents, whether Defenders or United Irishmen, under the assumption of the countenance or the actual connivance of government. There existed at this time a party, on whom the great weight of political influence and power had devolved, which was only to be kept up by the disunion of those, whose coalition must naturally outweigh and crush that monopoly of power, whether it were acquired by accident or design. Once the Orangemen had been encouraged by government in taking upon themselves the tone and function of affording protection, it became necessary for them to do away the odium, which they had incurred (rightly or wrongly no matter) with the mass of the people, who were Roman Catholics, from their past conduct. Some gentlemen therefore of that society at this time came forward and published an address to the public, which strongly disclaimed all the imputations and charges of their enemies, and expressed the most purified loyalty.* Certain it is, that the opposite parties availed themselves alternately

* This was the form of their address.

“ To the Loyal Subjects of Ireland.

“ FROM the various attempts that have been made to poison the public mind, and slander those who have had the spirit to adhere to their king and constitution, and to maintain the laws,

“ We the Protestants of Dublin, assuming the name of Orangemen, feel ourselves called upon, not to vindicate our principles, for we know that our honor and loyalty bid defiance to the shafts of malevolence and disaffection, but openly to disavow these principles and declare to the world the objects of our institution.

“ We have long observed with indignation the efforts that have been made, to foment rebellion in this kingdom, by the seditious, who have formed themselves into societies under the specious name of United Irishmen.

“ We have seen with pain the lower orders of our fellow subjects forced or seduced from their allegiance, by the threats and machinations of traitors.

“ And we have viewed with horror the successful exertions of miscreants to encourage a foreign enemy to invade this happy land, in hopes of rising into consequence, on the downfall of their country.

“ We therefore thought it high time to rally round the constitution, and pledge ourselves to each other to maintain the laws and support our good king against all his enemies, whether rebels to their God or to their country, and by so doing, shew to the world that there is a body of men in this island, who are ready in the hour of danger, to stand forward in the defence of that grand palladium of our liberty, the constitution of Great Britain and Ireland, obtained and established by the courage and loyalty of our ancestors, under the great King William.

“ Fellow subjects, we are accused of being an institution founded on principles too shocking to repeat,

ly of the advantage of misrepresenting their antagonists. In one district reports prevailed, that the Papists intended a general massacre of all the Protestants; in another, the Papists assembled and armed in great numbers under the threats, apprehensions, and terrors of having their throats cut by the Orangemen. Mutual recrimination and false charges became meritorious with each party: and the preparations made to resist these fictitious alarms generally produced mischief from the mere circumstance of an armed multitude assembling. The mischief of the association of Orangemen consisted in the principle of national disunion, which it essentially went to establish in perpetuity.* Their printed publication announced, that they were Protestants, and their regulations precluded the admission of Catholics among them. They made the most solemn protestation, that to injure any person on account of their religious opinion never entered their hearts. But so successful were the agents of revolt in their endeavours to counteract that protestation,* that it gained

“ repeat, and bound together by oaths, at which human nature would shudder; but we caution
 “ you not to be led away by such malevolent falsehoods, for we solemnly assure you in the presence
 “ of the Almighty God, that the idea of injuring any one on account of his religious opinion never
 “ entered into our hearts! We regard every loyal subject as our friend, be his religion what it
 “ may, we have no enmity but to the enemies of our country.

“ We further declare, that we are ready at all times, to submit ourselves to the orders of those in
 “ authority, under his majesty, and that we will cheerfully undertake any duty which they should
 “ think proper to point out for us, in case either a foreign enemy shall dare to invade our coasts,
 “ or that a domestic foe should presume to raise the standard of rebellion in the land; to these
 “ principles we are pledged, and in support of them we are ready to shed the last drop of our
 “ blood.

“ Signed by order of the several lodges in Dublin, for selves and other masters.

“ Thomas Verner,

“ Edward Ball,

“ John Claudius Beresford,

“ William James,

“ Isaac Dejoncourt.”

* Reverend Mr. Gordon's history of the Irish Rebellion, p. 32. “ I took,” says this author,
 “ once in particular, an opportunity to read the declaration to a number of my neighbours of this
 “ description, adding some comments from myself to persuade them into a belief of its sincerity.
 “ They said among themselves, ‘ see there now; it is not as we were told;’ and other words to the
 “ same purpose; and all seemed satisfied that they had been deceived. Yet, when I met some of
 “ them the following day, and spoke on the subject, they said that no reliance could be placed in
 “ such declarations, as Orangemen had entered into engagements, one with another, which were
 “ kept profoundly secret from all other people.”

no credit with the lower classes of Roman Catholics. It is impossible, that in a large community any particular society or collection of individuals, who meet with the countenance and encouragement of government, shutting out the great bulk of their fellow subjects from their society, should not create jealousy and discontent amongst the excluded. As the now avowed object of this confederated body of Orangemen was to preserve public order, and to make head against the United Irishmen and all other enemies to the state, the exclusion of the Catholics from their society was considered by the generality of the people (however it may have been really intended by the Orangemen) as an indirect charge or open intimation, that the Catholics made a common cause with the United Irishmen, and abetted those principles, to combat which the Orangemen now professed to have united. This presumption or insinuation necessarily created civil and political rivalry, jealousy and dissention: the annexing of the condition of Protestantism to the admission into their society, was rivetting the old, or creating a new ground of religious dissention, and consequently of rancour and animosity, which our beneficent sovereign had so often parentally and majestically recommended to his people to dispel and entomb for ever. As long as Orangemen or any other society of Irishmen form into societies under this religious distinction, it is impossible, that disunion, disaffection, jealousy, resentment, and all the black train of internal discord, should not thrive and rankle throughout the nation. Whilst such societies exist, religious distinctions can never subside.*

Notwithstanding

* Many attempts have been made to defend the principles of the Orange confederacy from the charges of cruelty, yet has it appeared to several of their opponents, that government had no doubt of the original existence of such an oath of extermination, at least amongst some of the lower fanatics of that society, from their examination of Mr. O'Connor; although not by the means or with the concurrence of government, (*Mem.* p. 52.)

Committee. If you did not organize for the purpose of effecting a revolution, what other object had you in view?

O'Connor. We saw with sorrow the cruelties practised by the Irish government had raised a dreadful spirit of revenge in the hearts of the people; we saw with horror that to answer their immediate views, the Irish government had renewed the old religious feuds; we were most anxious to have such authorities as the organization ready constituted to prevent the dreadful transports of popular fury. We hoped that by having committees, by holding out the benefits of the revolution to those who supported it, and by withholding its benefits from those who should disgrace it by popular excesses, we should have been able to restrain the people. But those who had monopolized the

Notwithstanding the rigor and severity of the measures adopted by government to put down or correct the turbulency and discontent of the nation, and to prevent it from rising into open rebellion; the discoveries, which led to the developement and disappointment of the traitorous designs of the conspirators, were rather fortuitous and unexpected, than the result of any preventative measures on the part of government. They appear to have arisen from pecuniary motives in one Thomas Reynolds, a silk mercer of Dublin, who had purchased an estate in the county of Kildare, called Kilkea Castle, and from the fortune he had acquired commanded considerable influence with his Catholic brethren. Lord Edward Fitzgerald and Oliver Bond, two leaders in the conspiracy, having, for these reasons, considered him a proper person to assist in forwarding their treasonable designs, easily attached him to their cause; and having succeeded, he was soon after sworn an United Irishman, at the house of Oliver Bond, in Dublin; in the year 1797 he accepted the commission of colonel, the offices of treasurer and representative of the county of Kildare, and at last, that of delegate for the province of Leinster. He had money dealings about a mortgage of some lands at Castle Jordon with a Mr. Cope, a Dublin merchant, who having lamented to him in the course of

the whole political power of the constitution, finding, that they stood in need of some of the population, and that from their monopoly so directly opposite to the interest of all classes of the Irish nation, they could not hope for the support of any (be their religion what it may) on the score of politics, except those in the pay of government. Finding how necessary it was to have some part of the population on their side, they had recourse to the old religious feuds, and set an organization of Protestants, whose fanaticism would not permit them to see they were enlisted under the banners of religion, to fight for political usurpation they abhorred. No doubt, by these means you have gained a temporary aid, but by destroying the organization of the union, and exasperating the great body of the people, you will one day pay dearly for the aid you have derived from this temporary shift.

Committee. Government had nothing to do with the Orange system, nor their extermination.

O'Connor. You, my Lord (Castlereagh) from the station you fill, must be sensible that the executive of any country has it in its power to collect a vast mass of information, and you must know from the secret nature, and the zeal of the union, that its executive must have the most minute information of every act of the Irish government. As one of the executive, it came to my knowledge, that considerable sums of money were expended throughout the nation, in endeavouring to extend the Orange system, and that the oath of extermination was administered; when these facts are coupled, not only with general impunity, which has been uniformly extended towards the acts of this infernal association, but the marked encouragement its members have received from government, I find it impossible to exculpate the government from being the parent and protector of these sworn extirpators.

conversation, the crimes and atrocities, which were constantly committed, and which were undoubted symptoms of an approaching rebellion, Mr. Reynolds, said, that he knew a person connected with the United Irishmen, who he believed, would defeat their nefarious projects, by communicating them to government, in order to make an atonement for the crime he had committed in joining them. Mr. Cope assured him, that such a person would obtain the highest honors and pecuniary rewards that administration could confer. But Mr. Reynolds said, nothing could tempt him to come forward and avow himself. However, after the most earnest and pressing solicitations repeatedly made on the part of Mr. Cope, he said, that his friend would appear in person, and disclose the particulars of the plot, on the following conditions: That he should not prosecute any United Irishman; that the channel through which the information came should be kept a secret, at least for a time; that as his life would be in danger upon its being known, and he must leave the country and go to England till matters were settled, which would derange his affairs, and put him to considerable expence, he expected to receive some compensation. Mr. Cope then told him, that he might draw on him for any sum not exceeding five hundred guineas. On that, he told Mr. Cope, that the Leinster delegates were to meet at Oliver Bond's on the 12th of March, to concert measures for an insurrection, which was shortly to take place, but did not at that time acknowledge that the information came directly from him, but insinuated it was imparted by a third person.

In consequence of this, Justice Swan, attended by twelve serjeants in coloured clothes, arrested the Leinster delegates, thirteen in number, while sitting in council in the house of Oliver Bond, in Bridge-street, on the 12th of March, 1798; and seized several of their papers, which led to the discovery of the plot, and the intended insurrection; and on the same day Messrs. Emmett, M'Nevin, Bond, Sweetman, Henry Jackson, and Hugh Jackson were arrested, taken into custody, and warrants were granted against Lord Edward Fitzgerald and Messrs. M'Cormick and Sampson, who having notice thereof made their escape.

The leaders of the conspiracy did not intend to bring forward an insurrection till the French came to their assistance, and they meant in the mean time to continue to increase their numbers, and to add to their stock of arms; but in the spring of 1798, the loyalty of the people was so strongly marked, that the chief conspirators began to perceive that their cause was losing ground,

ground, and that they had no alternative but to hazard a general rising, or to relinquish their hopes.

To prevent a despondency amongst the members of the union on the occasion of this discovery and seizure, a hand bill was circulated with industry, and had the effect of keeping up their spirits in a great degree.*

The seizure of the delegates was a death-blow to the schemes of the United Irishmen. A new directory was chosen, but they soon experienced the fate of the former; and, indeed, the rashness of their own conduct, in all probability, hastened the catastrophe. Their proceedings were developed and disclosed by another informer; this was a Captain Armstrong, of the King's County Militia, who had pretended to enter into the conspiracy with the intention of discovering their schemes, and betraying them to the government. It appears, that a part of their plan was to gain over as many of his majesty's troops as possible to their side, and particularly of the militia regiments, previous to their making a general attack upon the royal camp of Loughlinstown. For this purpose Captain Armstrong appeared a fit instrument. He had been in the habits of frequenting the shop of a bookseller, of the name of Byrne, in Grafton-street, Dublin, who was generally regarded as one of the literary

* As an instance of the feelings of the rebels at this period the form of this hand bill is given.
 “ For us the keen but momentary anxiety, occasioned by the situation of our invaluable friends,
 “ subsided, on learning all the circumstances of the case, into a calm tranquillity, a consoling con-
 “ viction of mind, that they are as safe as innocence can make them now; and to these sentiments
 “ were quickly added a redoubled energy, a ten-fold activity, of exertion, which has already pro-
 “ duced the happiest effects. The organization of the capital is perfect. No vacancies existing,
 “ arrangements have been made, and are still making, to secure for our oppressed brethren, whose
 “ trials approach, the benefit of legal defence, and the sentinels whom you have appointed to watch
 “ over your interests, stand firm at their posts, vigilant of events, and prompt to give you notice and
 “ advice, which, on every occasion at all requiring it rely on receiving. This recital, Irishmen, is
 “ meant to guard those of you who are remote from the scene of the late events, against the con-
 “ sequences of misrepresentation and mistake. The most unfounded rumours have been set afloat,
 “ fabricated for the double purpose of delusion and intimidation. Your enemies talk of treachery,
 “ in the vain and fallacious hope of creating it; but you, who scorn equally to be their dupes or
 “ their slaves, will meet their forgeries with dignified contempt, incapable of being either goaded
 “ into untimely violence, or sunk into pusillanimous despondency. Be firm, Irishmen,—but be
 “ cool and cautious; be patient yet a while; trust to no unauthorized communication; and above
 “ all, we warn you—again and again we warn you—against doing the work of your tyrants, by
 “ premature, by partial, or divided exertion. If Ireland shall be forced to throw away the scabbard,
 “ let it be at her own time, not theirs.”

agents of the rebel faction. Among the leading members of the United Irishmen were two young barristers, of the name of Sheares, both men of excellent talents, and of unfulfilled reputation, who had, both of them, been elected members of the Irish executive after the arrest of the old members on the 12th of March. To the acquaintance of these gentlemen Byrne proposed to introduce Captain Armstrong, whom he had from various conversations, been led to consider as a convert to their cause, and Armstrong had soon the address to insinuate himself completely into their confidence. * Recourse was soon after had to a general proclamation and military execution.† The proclamation, which was published on the 30th of March declared, that a traitorous conspiracy, existing within the kingdom for the destruction of the established government, had been considerably extended, and had manifested itself in acts of open violence and rebellion; and that in consequence thereof the most direct and positive orders had been issued to the officers commanding his majesty's forces to employ them with the utmost vigor and decision for the immediate suppression of that conspiracy, and for the disarming of the rebels and all disaffected persons, by the most summary and effectual measures. To Sir Ralph Abercromby, then chief commander of the forces, orders were issued from the lord lieutenant to proceed with his army into the disturbed countries, vested with full powers to act according to his discretion for the attainment of the proposed object. A manifesto, dated from his head quarters at Kildare, the 3d of April, was addressed to the inhabitants of the county by the general, requiring them to surrender their arms in the space of ten days from the date of the notice, threatening, in case of non compliance, to distribute large bodies of troops among them to live at free quarters—promising rewards to such as would give information of concealed arms or ammunition—and denouncing his resolution of recurring to other severities if the county should still continue in a disturbed state.

On the advance of the military into each county, the same notice was given to its inhabitants, and at the expiration of the term prescribed, the troops were quartered on the houses of the disaffected or suspected, in numbers proportioned to the supposed guilt and ability of the owners, whose pecuniary circumstances were often deeply injured by the maintenance of the soldiery, and the waste which was otherwise made of their effects. Numbers of houses, with their

* Gordon's History of the Irish Rebellion, p. 34.

† 17 Journ. Com. DCCCCXI.

furniture,

furniture, were burned, in which concealed arms had been found, in which meetings of the union had been holden, or whose occupants had been guilty of the fabrication of pikes, or had been suspected of other practices for the promotion of the conspiracy. Numbers were daily scourged, picketed, or otherwise put to pain, to force confessions of concealed arms or plots. Outrageous acts of severity were often committed by persons not in the regular troops, some from an unfeigned, and others from an affected zeal for the service of the crown. These various vexations amounted on the whole to such a mass of disquietude and distress, that the exhortations of the chiefs to bear their evils with steady patience, until an opportunity of successful insurrection should occur, proved vain with the lower classes.

To authorize the burning of houses and furniture, the wisdom of administration may have seen as good reason as for other acts of severity, though to many that reason was not clear. These burnings, doubtless, caused no small terror and consternation to the disaffected, but they caused also a loss to the community at large, rendered many quite desperate who were deprived of their all, augmented the violence of hatred in those, among whom these houseless people took refuge. Men imprisoned on suspicion, or private information, were sometimes half-hanged, or strangled almost to death, before their guilt or innocence could be ascertained by trial. Reflecting loyalists were much concerned at the permission or impunity of such acts, which tended strongly to confirm the prejudices already so laboriously excited by the emissaries of treason.

Among the causes, which in the troubled interval of time previous to the grand insurrection, contributed to the general uneasiness, were the insults practised by pretended zealots, to the annoyance of the truest loyalists as well as malcontents, on persons who wore their hair short, or happened to have any part of their apparel of a green colour, both of which were considered as emblems of republican or of a revolutionary spirit. The term *croppy* was adopted to signify a revolutionist, or an enemy to the established government. Persons of malevolent minds took advantage of these circumstances to indulge their general malignity or private malice, when they could with impunity. On the heads of many who were selected as objects of outrage, were fixed by these pretended loyalists caps of coarse linen or strong brown paper, smeared with pitch on the inside, which in some instances adhered so firmly as not to be disengaged without a laceration of the hair and
even

even skin. On the other side several of the united party, made it a practice to seize violently such as they thought proper or were able, and cropt or cut their hair short, which rendered them liable to the outrage of the pitched cap of those pretended, strenuous partizans of the constitution. Handkerchiefs, ribbons, even a sprig of myrtle and other parts of drefs marked with the obnoxious colour, were torn or cut away from females unconscious of disloyalty, and undefignedly bearing the imaginary badge. Various other violent acts were committed, so far as to cut away pieces of men's ears, even sometimes the whole ear, or a part of the nose: nor could the staunchest loyalist be certain always of exemption from insult by being clear of all imaginary marks of disloyalty; for on the arrival of a detachment of the army in any part of the country, where the inhabitants were known to the officers and foldiers, which was almost always the case, private malice was apt to convey in whispers false intelligence, marking individuals, perhaps the best members of society, as proper objects of military outrage, and they suffered accordingly.

By the system of secret accusation and espionage, perhaps rightly adopted with other extraordinary measures, in this dangerous crisis, government unavoidably made ample room for the exertions of private malice. Magistrates and military officers were empowered to receive informations, to keep the names of the informers profoundly secret, and proceed against the accused according to discretion. It should not be supposed that any magistrate could have pretended to receive information, which he had not received, for the indulgence of his private spite against an individual; but some of the gentlemen invested with these new powers were led into grievous errors by false informers, whose names notwithstanding have never been divulged. One particular instance gave cause to a debate in parliament. Thomas Fitzgerald, high sheriff of Tipperary, seized at Clonmel, a gentleman of the name of Wright, against whom no grounds of suspicion could be conjectured by his neighbours, caused five hundred lashes to be inflicted on him in the severest manner, and confined him several days without permitting his wounds to be dressed, so that his recovery from such a state of torture and laceration could hardly be expected. In a trial at law, after the rebellion, on an action of damages brought by Wright against this magistrate, the innocence of the plaintiff appeared so manifest, even at a time when prejudices ran amazingly high against persons accused of disloyalty, that the defendant was condemned to pay five hundred pounds to his prosecutor. Many other actions of damages

on similar grounds would have been commenced, if the parliament had not put a stop to such proceedings, by an act of indemnity, for all errors committed by magistrates from supposed zeal for the public service. A letter written in the French language, found in the pocket of Wright, was hastily considered a proof of guilt, though the letter were of a perfectly innocent nature.

As the conspiracy gained ground and notoriety, several leading gentlemen of the Roman Catholic persuasion, thought it requisite, that some act of the body should go forth to the public, expressive of their abhorrence and detestation of such traitorous principles, and with an endeavour to recal such of that persuasion, as had unfortunately been seduced to join in the rebellion or conspiracy against the government. Accordingly, on the 6th of May, Lords Fingall, Gormanstown, Southwell, Kenmare, Sir Edward Bellew, and 41 gentlemen and professors of divinity, and the president of the college of Maynooth, published a declaration* under their signatures, with a view of rescuing their body from the imputation of abetting and favoring rebellion and treason.

About

* Such is the form of that declaration.

“ DUBLIN, *May 6, 1798.*

“ To such of the deluded people now in Rebellion against his Majesty’s Government, in this Kingdom, as profess the Roman Catholic religion.

“ THE undersigned Roman Catholics of Ireland feel themselves earnestly called on, to remonstrate with such of the deluded people of that persuasion, as are now engaged in open rebellion against his majesty’s government, on the wicked tendency and consequences of the conduct which they have embraced; they apprehend with equal horror and concern, that such deluded men, in addition to the crime committed against the allegiance which they owe to his majesty, have in some instances attempted to give to their designs, a colour of zeal for the religion which they profess. The undersigned profess equally with them, the Roman Catholic religion: some of them are bishops of that persuasion, others are heads of the leading families who profess that religion; and others are men of the same persuasion, who, by an honorable industry, have, under the constitution, now sought to be subverted, raised themselves to a situation, which affords them, in the most extensive sense, all the comforts of life. The undersigned of each description concur in entreating such of the deluded, who have taken up arms against the established government, or entered into engagements tending to that effect, to return to their allegiance; and by relinquishing the treasonable plans in which they are engaged, to entitle themselves to that mercy, which their lawful governors anxiously wish to extend to them; a contrary conduct will inevitably subject them to loss of life and property, and expose their families to ignominy and beggary; whilst at the same time it will throw on their religion, of which they profess to be the advocates, the most indelible stain: on this point, the unfortunately deluded will do well to

“ consider

About the 10th of May, Captain Armstrong, who had been introduced to the Messrs. Sheares, with the view and intent of acquiring and communicating to government full knowledge of the designs and measures of the United Irishmen, had apprized Lord Castlereagh, that a general rising, as it was termed by them, of the people, must immediately take place. The whole of the United Irishmen throughout the kingdom, or at least throughout the province of Leinster, were to act at once in concert; and it was their intention to seize the camp of Loughlinstown, the artillery of Chapel-izod, and the Castle of Dublin, in one night, the 23d of May. One hour was to be allowed between seizing the camp of Loughlinstown, and the artillery at Chapel-izod; and one hour and a half between seizing the artillery and surprising the Castle; and the parties who executed both of the external plans, were to enter the city of Dublin at the same moment. The stopping of the mail coaches was to be the signal for the insurgents every where to commence their operations. It was also planned, that a great insurrection should take place at Cork

“ consider whether the true interests and honor of the Roman Catholic religion are likely to be
 “ most considered by the bishops of that persuasion; by the ancient families who profess that reli-
 “ gion, and who have resisted every temptation to relinquish it; by men, who at once professing it,
 “ and submitting to the present constitution, have arrived at a state of affluence which gratifies
 “ every wish; or by a set of desperate and profligate men, availing themselves of the want of edu-
 “ cation and experience in those, whom they seek to use as instruments for gratifying their own
 “ wicked and interested views. At all events, the undersigned feel themselves bound to rescue
 “ their names, and as far as in them lies, the religion which they profess, from the ignominy which
 “ each would incur, from an appearance of acquiescence in such criminal and irreligious conduct:
 “ and they hesitate not to declare, that the accomplishment of the views of the deluded of their per-
 “ suasion, if effected, must be effected by the downfall of the clergy, of the ancient families and
 “ respectable commercial men of the Roman Catholic religion, the undersigned individuals of each
 “ of which description hereby publicly declare their determination to stand or fall with the present
 “ existing constitution.

“ FINGALL,
 “ GORMANSTOWN,
 “ SOUTHWELL,
 “ KENMARE,
 “ Sir EDWARD BELLEW, with 41 gentlemen and pro-
 “ fessors of divinity, together with the Rev. PETER
 “ FLOOD, D. D. president of the Royal College of
 “ St. Patrick Maynooth, for himself, the professors,
 “ and students of said college.”

at

at the same time. The united men were, however, at that period, not exactly agreed as to the nature of the insurrection. Mr. Samuel Nelson, with some other of the leaders, were bent upon attacking first the county gaol of Kilmaham, and the gaol of Newgate, in order to set their comrades at liberty; and the project for attacking the latter was also fixed for the 23d of May, the night of the general insurrection. The Sheares, however, and others, were of a contrary opinion, and they wished to defer the attack of the gaols till after the general insurrection had taken place; and even threatened to give notice to government of the plot, if Nelson and his friends did not immediately desist.

Although the government had been long in possession, through the communications of Reynolds, Armstrong, and other informers, of all the particulars of the conspiracy, they had hitherto permitted or encouraged its progress, in order, as it has been alledged, that the suppression of it might be effected with more eclat and terror. As the expected explosion however now drew so near, it was found to be necessary to arrest several of the principal conspirators, who might give directions, energy, and effect to the insurrection. Lord Edward Fitzgerald had absconded since the 12th of March; and on the 18th of May, Major Sirr having received information that he would pass through Watling-street that night, and be preceded by a chosen band of traitors, as an advanced guard, and that he would be accompanied by another, repaired thither, attended by Captain Ryan, Mr. Emerson, of the attorney's corps, and a few soldiers in coloured clothes. They met the party which preceded him, and had a skirmish with them on the quay at the end of Watling-street, in which some shots were exchanged; and they took prisoner one of them, who called himself at one time Jameson, at another time Brand.

The arrest of Lord Edward Fitzgerald, which was effected next day, the 19th of May, in the following manner, tended very much to defeat the malignant designs of the conspirators, as he was the chief projector of the intended insurrection, and they entertained the highest opinion of his courage and military abilities.

Government having received information that he had arrived in Dublin, and was lodged in the house of one Murphy, a featherman in Thomas-street, sent Major Sirr to arrest him. He, attended by Captain Swan, of the revenue corps, and Captain Ryan, of the Sepulchre's, and eight soldiers disguised, about five o'clock in the evening repaired in coaches to Murphy's

house. While they were posting the soldiers in such a manner as to prevent the possibility of an escape, Captain Swan perceiving a woman run hastily up stairs, for the purpose, as he supposed, of alarming Lord Edward, followed her with the utmost speed; and, on entering an apartment, found Lord Edward lying on a bed, in his dressing jacket. He approached the bed, and informed his lordship that he had a warrant against him, and that resistance would be vain; assuring him at the same time that he would treat him with the utmost respect.

Lord Edward sprang from the bed, and snapped a pistol, which missed fire, at Captain Swan: he then closed with him, drew a dagger, gave him a wound in the hand, and different wounds in his body; one of them under the ribs was deep and dangerous, and bled most copiously.

At that moment Captain Ryan entered, and missed fire at Lord Edward with a pocket pistol; on which he made a lunge at him with a sword cane, which bent on his ribs; but affected him so much, that he threw himself on the bed, and Captain Ryan having thrown himself on him, a violent scuffle ensued, during which Lord Edward drew a dagger, and plunged it into his side. They then fell on the ground, where Captain Ryan received many desperate wounds; one of which, in the lower part of his belly, was so large, that his bowels fell out on the floor. Major Sirr having entered the room, saw Captain Swan bleeding, and Lord Edward advancing towards the door, while Captain Ryan weltering in blood on the floor, was holding him by one leg, and Captain Swan by the other, he therefore fired at Lord Edward with a pistol, and wounded him in the shoulder, on which he cried out for mercy, and surrendered himself. His lordship was then conveyed to the Castle, but was on the point of being rescued before he left Thomas-street; for Edward Ratigan, a major of the rebels, assembled a great number of them, and gave them a considerable quantity of carbines and pikes out of St. Catharine's watch-house, of which he was a director, and called on them to rescue Lord Edward; which would have been effected, but that Major Sirr received the assistance of the Rainsford-street guard, and the picquet guard of the Castle, consisting mostly of cavalry, for which he had seasonably sent a messenger.

Samuel Neilson confessed afterwards, that he was in another quarter with five hundred pikemen, and that he would have attempted a rescue, had not the guards arrived in due time.

On the 19th and 21st of May, several other arrests were made. Amongst others,

others, Patrick Byrne, the bookfeller, and Messrs. Sheares, were committed for high treason. In the house of Messrs. Sheares, in Baggot-street, was found a proclamation,* which was intended to have been published on the morning

*The above-mentioned manifesto or proclamation was in the state of a rough copy, not yet finished for publication. It ran in the following terms, 17 Journ. Com. DCCCLXXX.—“ Irishmen, “ your country is free, and you are about to be avenged. That vile government, which has so “ long and so cruelly oppressed you, is no more. Some of its most atrocious monsters have already “ paid the forfeit of their lives, and the rest are in our hands. The national flag, the sacred green, “ is at this moment flying over the ruins of despotism; and that capital, which a few hours past “ had witnessed the debauchery, the plots, and the crimes of your tyrants, is now the citadel of “ triumphant patriotism and virtue. Arise then, united sons of Ireland—arise like a great and “ powerful people, to live free, or die. Arm yourselves by every means in your power, and rush “ like lions on your foes. Consider, that for every enemy you disarm, you arm a friend, and thus “ become doubly powerful. In the cause of liberty, inaction is cowardice, and the coward shall “ forfeit the property he has not the courage to protect. Let his arms be secured and transferred “ to those gallant spirits who want and will use them. Yes, Irishmen, we swear by that eternal “ justice, in whose cause you fight, that the brave patriot who survives the present glorious struggle, “ and the family of him who has fallen, or hereafter shall fall in it, shall receive from the hands “ of the grateful nation an ample recompence out of that property, which the crimes of our enemies “ have forfeited into its hands; and his name shall be inscribed on the great national record “ of Irish revolution, as a glorious example to all posterity; but we likewise swear to punish robbery with death and infamy. We also swear that we will never sheath the sword till every being “ in the country is restored to those equal rights which the God of nature has given to all men; “ until an order of things shall be established in which no superiority shall be acknowledged among “ the citizens of Erin but that of virtue and talents. As for those degenerate wretches who turn “ their swords against their native country, the national vengeance awaits them. Let them find “ no quarter, unless they shall prove their repentance, by speedily exchanging the standard of “ slavery for that of freedom, under which their former errors may be buried, and they may share “ the glory and advantages that are due to the patriot bands of Ireland. Many of the military feel “ the love of liberty glow within their breasts, and have joined the national standard. Receive “ with open arms such as shall follow so glorious an example: they can render signal service to “ the cause of freedom, and shall be rewarded according to their deserts. But, for the wretch who “ turns his sword against his native country, let the national vengeance be visited on him; let him “ find no quarter. Two other crimes demand Rouse all energies of your souls: “ call forth all the merits and abilities which a vicious government consigned to obscurity; and “ under the conduct of your chosen leaders, march with a steady step to victory. Heed not the “ glare of hired soldiery, or aristocratic yeomanry: they cannot stand the vigorous shock of freedom. Their trappings and their arms will soon be yours; and the detested government of “ England, to which we vow eternal hatred, shall learn, that the treasures it exhausts on its accoutred slaves, for the purpose of butchering Irishmen, shall but further enable us to turn their

morning after the insurrection should have taken place: it manifested the bloody projects of the rebels, had the conspiracy succeeded. It has been observed, by the Rev. Dr. Gordon (p. 66), that "in fact the severe and terrible measures, to which government, for the preservation of its existence, had been obliged to have recourse, must naturally excite a spirit of revenge and cruelty in the malcontent faction; yet the former members of the directory, among whom was Thomas Addis Emmett, had intended to avoid bloodshed as much as possible, and only to banish those who should prove refractory, allowing their families a maintenance out of their properties."*

On

"swords on its devoted head. Attack them in every direction by day and by night: avail yourselves of the natural advantages of your country, which are innumerable, and with which you are better acquainted than they. Where you cannot oppose them in full force, constantly harass their rear and their flanks: cut off their provisions and magazines, and prevent them as much as possible from uniting their forces: let whatever moments you cannot devote to fighting for your country, be passed in learning how to fight for it, or preparing the means of war: for war, war alone must occupy every mind and every hand in Ireland, until its long oppressed soil be purged of all its enemies. Vengeance, Irishmen! Vengeance on your oppressors! Remember what thousands of your dearest friends have perished by their merciless orders. Remember their burnings, their rackings, their torturings, their military massacres, and their legal murders. Remember Orr.

* The examination of Mr. Emmett before the committee of the lords has given us the following account of the intentions of the executive: 17 Com. Journ. DCCCCIX.

"*Question.* Was John Sheares a member of the executive before your arrest?

"*Answer.* He was not. Says the old executive never meant to spill blood, but rather to retain men of a certain rank as hostages, and if they found them hostile to the new government, to send them out of the country. That it was also determined, that if the wives of such persons did not act with hostility to the new government, they should be allowed a maintenance out of the husband's property, and that each child should have a portion, the residue to belong to the nation.

The before mentioned Memoir gives the following more enlarged account. *Mem. p. 31.*

"*Lord Kilwarden.* You seem averse to insurrection; I suppose it was because you thought it impolitic.

"*Emmett.* Unquestionably: for if I imagined an insurrection could have succeeded, without a great waste of blood and time, I should have preferred it to invasion, as it would not have exposed us to the chance of contributions being required by a foreign force; but as I did not think so, and as I was certain an invasion would succeed speedily, and without much struggle, I preferred it even at the hazard of that inconvenience, which we took every means to prevent.

"*Lord Dillon.* Mr. Emmett, you have stated the views of the executive to be very liberal and very enlightened, and I believe yours were so; but let me ask you, whether it was not intended to cut off (in the beginning of the contest) the leaders of the opposition party, by a summary mode

On the 21st of May Lord Castlereagh, by direction of the lord lieutenant, wrote to the lord mayor, to acquaint him, “ That his excellency had discovered, that the disaffected in the city and neighbourhood of Dublin, had formed a plan of possessing themselves, in the course of the present week, of the metropolis, and of seizing the executive government, and those in authority within the city.” And on the 22d of May, 1798, his lordship presented a message to the House of Commons, from his excellency :

“ That he had received information, that the disaffected had been daring enough to form a plan, for the purpose of possessing themselves, in the course of that week, of the metropolis, of seizing the seat of government, and those in authority within the city ; that, in consequence of that in-

“ mode, such as assassination : my reason for asking you is, John Sheares’s proclamation, the most terrible paper that ever appeared in any country : it says, that ‘ many of your tyrants have bled, and others must bleed,’ &c.

“ *Emmett.* My lords, as to Mr. Sheares’s proclamation, he was not of the executive when I was.

“ *Lord Chancellor.* He was of the new executive.

“ *Emmett.* I do not know he was of any executive, except from what your lordship says ; but I believe he was joined with some others in framing a particular plan of insurrection for Dublin and its neighbourhood : neither do I know what value he annexed to those words in his proclamation : but I can answer, that while I was of the executive, there was no such design, but the contrary ; for we conceived when one of you lost your lives we lost an hostage. Our intention was to seize you all, and keep you as hostages, for the conduct of England ; and after the revolution was over, if you could not live under the new government, to send you out of the country. I will add one thing more, which though it is not an answer to your question, you may have a curiosity to hear. In such a struggle it was natural to expect confiscations : our intention was, that every wife who had not instigated her husband to resistance should be provided for out of the property, notwithstanding confiscations ; and every child, who was too young to be his own master, or form his own opinion, was to have a child’s portion. Your lordships will now judge how far we intended to be cruel.

“ *Lord Chancellor.* Pray Mr. Emmett, what caused the late insurrection ?

“ *Emmett.* The free quarters, the house burnings, the tortures, and the military executions, in the counties of Kildare, Carlow, and Wicklow.

“ *Lord Chancellor.* Don’t you think the arrests of the 12th of March caused it ?

“ *Emmett.* No : but I believe if it had not been for these arrests it would not have taken place ; for the people, irritated by what they suffered, had been long pressing the executive to consent to an insurrection, but they had resisted or eluded it, and even determined to persevere in the same line : after these arrests, however, other persons came forward, who were irritated, and thought differently, who consented to let that partial insurrection take place.”

“ formation,

“ formation, he had directed every military precaution to be taken, which
“ seemed expedient; that he had made full communication to the ma-
“ gistrates, for the direction of their efforts; and that he had not a doubt,
“ by the measures which would be pursued, the designs of the rebellious
“ would be effectually and entirely crushed.”

To this message, the House of Commons voted an address, “ To assure his
“ excellency, that the intelligence which it communicated filled them with
“ horror and indignation, whilst it raised in them a spirit of determined re-
“ solution and energy; that they relied on the vigilance and vigour of his
“ excellency’s government, which they trusted would continue unabated,
“ until the conspiracy, which so fatally existed, should be utterly dissolved.”

The speaker and all the members immediately waited on his excellency
with the address; and to shew their zeal, and to increase the solemnity of the
proceeding, they walked through the streets on foot, two and two, preceded
by the speaker, the serjeant at arms, and all the officers of the house.



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